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Vol. 2

OR,

THE MEETING OF THE WAYS

AT THE

Catholic Church.

THE SECOND BOOK.

LONDON:
C. DOLMAN, 61, NEW BOND STREET.
MDCCCXLIX.

1803544

The receipts of this volume are for the poor, who are visited by the Conference of St. Vincent of Paul, in Dublin.

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Compitum.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROAD OF RURAL IMPRESSIONS.

WITHIN those very forest bounds to which we still revert from time to time, as yielding a similitude with life, there is a crest of rocks forming open spaces, thinly shaded with the mountain ash, whence can be seen the rich champaigns in the distance, and the wide-skirted meads through which a noble river passes, forming with its blue sparkling stream a vast semicircle near the shadowy wood. Following here a new path, by which we enter on the ways answering to the clear contemplation of eternal things, we reach as it were an elevated tract, beautiful with purple heath, presenting, where the rocks project, a glorious prospect over the forest and adjacent country ; above all, when we can see from it the golden dawn break forth and waken each cloud and every distant spire on the plain.

Of the impressions guiding to truth and final happiness, which are produced on leaving home and school by travel, the first perhaps in order may be those, already briefly noticed in the last book, arising from the spectacle of nature, in all the variety of objects and seasons which the face of the earth supplies. That the mountains and hills and all the trees of the wood constitute a school, that the natural world points to the Catholic Church, that the Catholic life and its opposite can be taught, in a certain sense, by an observation of the varied scenery spread before the eyes of the traveller, is a proposition that will appear to some, no doubt, very fanciful, if not the height of exaggeration ; but notwithstanding their reluctance to admit such thoughts, there is great reason for believing it to be neither rash nor extravagant, as will be admitted by those who bring to their observation of the visible world that great power of attention in which,

according to the definition of Buffon, genius consists. Neither is it a novel proposition, for it is the oldest authors to whom it is most familiar. "God proposes three books to us," says St. Anthony of Padua, "the book of conscience in the heart—that of Scripture in the ear—and that of nature before our face. Hence we read, 'Ecce, descripsi eam tripliciter.' We must therefore recur sometimes to one, sometimes to another. Thus, for instance, the book of nature teaches that even the sweetest fruits begin with bitterness—as the grapes and figs, which are long tasteless or sour before being brought to maturity *." The angelic doctor goes so far as to affirm, that traces even of the mysteries of faith can be found in it,

"Cunctis rebus procreatis,
Impressum est Trinitatis
Aliquod vestigium †."

"The Divine Providence," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "has provided the book of nature for one class of disciples, as if for the little scholars, containing certain rudiments, in which book, by means of joining letters and syllogisms, they can attain to the wisdom of intelligible things. Whence Bernard compares the visible world to a common book, suspended by a chain to a column, as in cloisters and churches, that all who wish from the promiscuous multitude may read from it,"—a comparison which appears the more just, from observing that poverty does not prevent men from loving the beauties of nature, or deny them the means of cultivating the habits which conduce to their appreciation; since these sublime spectacles, so far superior to all artificial grandeur, are open for the enjoyment and instruction still more perhaps of the poor and illiterate than of any other class. Moreover, in our times, this book is become the more valuable as being secure from the declared enemies of truth, who seek to deprive men of every thing else that can bind them to it. Alas! men take away the cloisters and the supernatural guides—they overthrow the column, but the pages of creation, the public manuscript that lies expanded unto the eyes of all, as Sir Thomas Browne calls it, cannot be removed along with the column and the external fruits of divine faith. With eyes fixed on trees and shrubs we trace rule, order, obedience, silence, holy habits, harmonious arrangement, and a reflection of celestial tranquillity; with the sun and the clouds still our own, we can read in meek fair holy nature's face, pourtrayed in skies of morning and evening, casting their clear, pure, heavenly colours over hill and wood and sparkling wave, the goodness and the loveliness from

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* S. Antonii de Pad. Serm. Fer. IV. Hebd. ii. in Quad.

† Doct. Ang. Sum. Theolog. Rhythmica Synopsis, c. 1.

which the visible creation sprang. "Thus," says the Spanish saint, "the world is offered to all nations, that they may read in it the wisdom, power, goodness, beauty, and perfection of the Creator. Happy the man who reads that little elementary book! Let us not despise it because it is beautiful; for great wisdom shines in it. O how wondrous and how beautiful is it! What lovely characters—the sun, moon, stars; the sky, and land, and sea; and the variety of animals, of trees, and flowers! But many, like infants, only stare astonished, and are unable to read or comprehend them. O if we could understand! O if we could read! O if we could penetrate these creatures as the just and holy have ever done, what a flavour, what wisdom should we find in them! What great theology and philosophy lie in these things! But we seek not, as rational, the significations and voices of visible things; but, like cattle, we only use them. Truly I wonder why Aristotle, Plato, Theophrastus, Pliny, Dioscorides, Avicenna, and Galen, should have written so much on the property and virtue of things, but so little on this true philosophy*." Some proceed farther, as convinced they could not have found the ground of study's excellence without nature's volume affording the ground, the books, the academies, from which doth spring the true Promethean fire; so they exclaim, Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife, come hear the woodland linnet, and rejoice in the sweetness of his song! Universal plodding (they continue) only prisons up the nimble spirits in the arteries, as long-during action tires the sinewy vigour of the traveller; while intercourse with nature's book makes the mind subtle as sphinx, as sweet and musical as bright Apollo's lute: therefore, without insisting on what Pliny testifies, where he says that trees have been known to speak†, we may certainly admit that—

> "One impulse from a vernal wood
> May teach far more of man,
> Of moral evil, and of good,
> Than all some masters can."

Catholicity, without doubt, comprehends the aspect of the external world, in the vast circle of its moral and religious studies, for the instruction and guidance of men; though at the same time it proclaims the necessity of entering upon a new sphere of ideas, corresponding with the supernatural scheme which it comprises of universal renovation.

It is true, as St. Bruno says of the Church in his book De Novo Mundo, "All things are new in this new world; the Church has new skies, a new earth, a new sun, a new moon, new

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* S. Thom. a Vill. De Nativ. Virg. c. 1.

† Nat. Hist. lib. xvii. 38.

stars, new clouds, new thunders, new mountains, and new woods—new heavens declaring the glory of God, a new earth that will give its fruit—a new moon under the feet of her who is beautiful as the moon—a new star, that of Jacob and our Stella Maris—the new clouds, apostles who fly over the world—the new mountains to which we should raise our eyes as those from which our help cometh, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and doctors who, raised above earth, approach heaven—new creatures, birds, and fishes, both from the waters sprung, which amongst all creatures received the first benediction, by which are signified holy men who are born again of water. Lo, this is the new world of the Church, made clean from the unclean*." Nevertheless she disdains not to employ all parts of the old visible and ordinary world to teach and point out spiritual truth; and the poet does but echo the complaint of those who use it for another purpose, when exclaiming—

> " What! are men mad? Hath nature given them eyes
> To see this vaulted arch, and the rich crop
> Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt
> The fiery orbs above, and the twinn'd stones
> Upon the number'd beach? and can we not
> Partition make in morals and in belief
> 'Twixt fair and foul?"

The use of creation's book by Catholicity may be witnessed in the prose for Advent, as sung in the eleventh century:—

> " Jubilemus omnes uno Deo nostro, qui creavit omnia,
> Per quem condita sunt sæcula:
> Cœlum quod plurima luce coruscat, et diversa sidera,
> Sol mundi, schema, noctium decus luna, cunctaque splendentia;
> Mare, solum, alta, plana, et profunda flumina,
> Aeris ampla spatia, quæ discurrunt aves, venti atque pluvia.
> Hæc simul cuncta tibi soli Deo Patri militant
> Nunc et in ævum, sine fine per sæcula:
> Laus eorum tua gloria;
> Qui pro salute nostra Prolem unicam
> Pati in terra misisti sine culpa, sed ob nostra delicta†."

Thus is the book of nature employed by her to proclaim that great distinguishing doctrine of the Christian religion, as the late glorious martyr who ruled the see of Paris told the stranger, he considered it to be, the creation of the world by God, which the Pagan Pliny denies in the first page of his " Natural History," though, as St. Augustin says, the spectacle of the world attests it. " Mundus ipse ordinatissimâ suâ mutabilitate et mobilitate,

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* S. Brunonis de Novo Mundo c. 1.
† Dom Guéranger l'année Liturgique.

et visibilium omnium pulcherrimâ specie, quodammodo tacitus et factum se esse, et non nisi à Deo ineffabiliter atque invisibiliter magno et ineffabiliter atque invisibiliter pulchro, fieri se potuisse proclamat*."

As all the elements acknowledged the divinity of the Son of God, so do they all minister in some way or other to his Church, while the visible earth itself is not without a language, even palpable marks, that can recall and corroborate its sacred history. "The first creation," as a learned author observes, "was a prophecy of that to come; and hence all created things speak of the beloved Bride and of her ways†."

"At best we see but darkly, and this world
Is but a mirror to the eye of Faith,
On which eternal things by sunlight cast
Pass on like shadows."

That the earth, with all visible above it, teaches a mysterious doctrine, is acknowledged by the philosophers and poets. Plato even says, "that the visible can only be explained by contemplating the invisible world‡." Will you hear the poets:—"O earth," they exclaim, "O pure creation, fields and groves, fraternal world! I study thy mysterious language, murmured on the wind, and written on the heavens with the stars. Art thou not a book in which all should read, holy book of which sages meditate the profound sense—over which the austere contemplatist ponders and grows pale—in which the eye sees a wondrous orb, and the soul the workmanship of God?" The Romans thought they used to hear voices from their sacred groves; and a modern poet, with a spirit too much akin to theirs, thinks that he also has heard monitory sounds from the trees of the wood.

"A wind arose among the oaks; it shook
The clinging music from their boughs, and then
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts
Were heard: O follow, follow, follow me!
And in the depth of the vast wood I look'd, and then
I saw follow, follow, stamp'd on each leaf!"

"Wherever the forest spreads I heard," he adds, "still the same words—follow, follow: shall we pursue the sound? It grows more faint and distant, the notes sink upon the ebbing wind—

"O follow, follow,
Thro' the caverns hollow,
As the song floats then pursue,
By the woodland noontide dew,
By the forests, lakes, and fountains,
Thro' the many-folded mountains."

"Come link thy hand in mine, and follow ere the voices fade

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[*] S. August. Civ. Dei, lib. xi. c. 4.

[†] Morris, Nature, a Parab.

[‡] De repub. vii.

away." So, wandering on, it seemed to him as if the invitation were written as well as conveyed by echoes of the forest; for the frost of the preceding night having strewn the path more and more with the wild shower, he thought that on each leaf was stamped, as the blue bells of hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief, "O follow, follow!" Such are the fond impressions of genius or of vainly curious men, who often reject the true to follow delusive and imaginary signals; for the sibyl, singing the fates and writing her verses upon the leaves to be then scattered to the winds*, would still find many mortals anxious to collect and interpret such predictions. The stranger's grandfather in his old age is said to have prayed like that solitary recluse in Egypt, who besought God saying, "Domine, ostende mihi judicia tua†;" and it is added, that walking one evening in the autumn through his woods of Laundenstown, as leaves were falling thick around, his eye was arrested by one on which letters seemed impressed; and that, on taking it up, he found a Hebrew word in answer to his prayer, in memory of which he is painted with the leaf which is still preserved, some say, by his descendants. But the true lessons of the trees and flowers are read by some, who are then conducted by them to the source of real security, "follow, follow me!" Ah, yes, we must not shame these woods: the woods where so many anachorites have spent their days—where so many saints have walked in solitude, may well be thought to utter such invitations to follow all the holy that have lived amongst them. Truly, as the natural philosopher says, "et montium sonitus, nemorumque mugitus prædicunt; et sine aura, quæ sentiatur, folia ludentia‡." The very leaves of the forest can teach much or shame much. An old poet of France expresses the influence arising from the general character of such scenes, saying, "This peaceful silence, and this fearful solitude, gently constrain men to keep silence. Let us be silent then, O muse! and let us resolve in this spot never to speak henceforth, excepting to the glory of God§." Another feels the same solemn impression, and after singing of profane things, breaks off, saying, "Leave this strain, it ill becomes either the hour or the place. To sit in judgment and pass hard sentences is an unfitting boldness amid this tranquil beauty. It is we who sympathize not with the earth, not earth that sympathizes not with us. Listen to that long moan above yon copse. What a power silence has to absorb and incorporate with herself every sound which comes not from man or human toil‖!" "How sweetly," cries Theocritus, "sounds that pine which is near the fountain, and that water which trickles down from the rock!" To such ears there ought to be no discord in divine philosophy

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* Æn. iii. 441.

† Ex lib. Sentent. Patrum, 410.

‡ Plin. Nat. Hist. xviii. 86.

§ Saint-Amant.

‖ Faber.

which is in tune with all the harmonies of the idyl, loving "to catch soft hints from nature's tongue."

We are proceeding with slow steps; but to pass along this road of rural impressions with advantage, hearing and marking what serves to guide the soul, we must be content to follow the old method of slow observation, not attempt to introduce into this sphere the new inventions of hurried and impatient travellers; for what St. Thomas of Villanova says of perfection in general, is in an especial manner applicable to this path. Perfectionis via non pervolanda, sed perambulanda est [*]. Step by step then let us move onward, and mark how the visible world teaches the doctrines of faith, so that each morning walk over the purple hills, each pause at noon to read and meditate in woods or caverns hoary with the vexed surge, will from the comment nature yields be, as Socrates says, "so much gained towards the enjoyment of the future life."

To begin then by begging *ῥάκιόν τι τοῦ παλαιοῦ δράματος*, say who has not sometimes cried with Phædra, "O that I could gain the fountain, the shade under the poplars, and the green meadow;

> *πέμπετέ μ' εἰς ὄρος· εἶμι πρὸς ὕλαν*
> *καὶ παρὰ πεύκας*—

Lead me to the mountain; I go to the forest—through the pines." Who has not even felt a wish like that of the chorus of the suppliants,

> "To be seated upon rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
> To trace from them the forest's shady scene,
> Where things that own not man's dominion roam,
> And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
> To climb the trackless mountain with the wild flock
> That never needs a fold."

"O that I could find myself," cries that chorus, "on one of these peaks, like an aerial throne—covered with snow, deposited by humid clouds, some steep rock, inaccessible to goats, inhospitable, solitary, retreat for vultures—

> *πόθεν δέ μοι γένοιτο ἂν αἰθέρος θρόνος,*
> *πρὸς ὃν νέφη δι' ὑδρηλὰ γίγνεται χιών,*
> *ἢ λισσὰς αἰγίλιψ ἀπρόσ-*
> *δεκτος οἰόφρων ἐρημάς*—
> *γυπίας πέτρα* [†]."

Whence this strange and universal attraction? whence that unutterable joy felt by youth when it finds itself under the sweet morning air on the pastures that lead on to the dark blue Alps, with tops of glittering snow? or roaming "thro' forests wild and old, and lawny dells, where boughs of incense droop over

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[*] De visit. Virg.

[†] 789.

the emerald wells ?" It is not so much that these things have a voice which is in some degree intelligible to the soul of man, as if it heard, Follow, O follow,—as that they are invested with some of the attributes of truth, and able to point the way to its lost country,

———"Where man, desirous
Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams,
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows is all unworthy to survey *,"

may regain his home, and enjoy it with immortality. Let us pause here in order to observe more closely the identity of doctrine taught in the two schools of nature and of the Catholic Church. Walking through the forest thus, I cannot too much muse these shapes, these changes, and these sounds, expressing, although they want the use of tongue, a kind of excellent dumb discourse. In the first place, to teach the art of joy may be said to form one of the characteristics of the Catholic religion :— and is not this art inspired by the spectacle of nature which of itself refutes all gloomy heresies ?

"For mighty nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth ;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream."

How the heart is cheered and the countenance made glad by gazing on plains overflowing with milk and honey, or laughing with oil and wine, or on sweet-aired hills, or rivers which communicate their own freshness to our nature !—Spencer has similar impressions :—

"Raunging the forest wide on courser free,
The fields, the floods, the heavens, with one consent
Did seeme to laugh on me, and favour mine intent."

Such are the smiles, as another poet says,—

"Which nature yields, responsive to the rays
Of the great Bridegroom, when the heavenly powers
Seem vying who shall look most gladsomely
On man ; the while the forest trees rejoice
Before their Lord, and every field and grove,
As doth a bride, their dewy pearls put on †."

"Nor all forgotten be those humble flowers,—
Daisies and Buttercups—the child's first love ;
Which lent their magic to our guileless hours,
Ere cares were known :
Ah ! joyous time ! through verdant meads to rove,
With wild flowers strewn ‡."

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* Wordsworth. † Morris. ‡ Merritt.

If we admit the affinity which another poet speaks of, saying that he resigns himself to the influence of those "three harmonies,—spring, morning, childhood," it is but a just inference to affirm that nature represented by the former pleasures points to that divine faith so closely allied to youthful innocence, which declares all true joy to be of heaven.

Again, to proclaim, to inculcate, and inspire peace, forms another object of the Catholic religion; and does not the spectacle of nature second this great lesson, and point to faith and to its mysteries as the only secure source from which that peace can be obtained? Indeed the serene impression arising from rural walks was what the saints chiefly loved in the country life. They preferred, it is true, to leave cities as the busy haunts of worldly men: "si vero prematur aliquis," they said with St. Gregory, "corporaliter popularibus turbis, et tamen nullos sæcularium tumultus in corde patiatur, non est in urbe!" They found peace generally, it is true, in woods and valleys.

"Concava vallis erat, quâ se demittere rivi
Assuerant pluvialis aquæ. Tenet ima lacunæ
Lenta salix, ulvæque leves, juncique palustres,
Viminaque, et longæ parvâ sub arundine cannæ *."

Yet even here they yearned after a deeper peace: there were even rural sounds that troubled them. The Abbot Arsenius came once to a place where there was a great sound of reeds moved by the wind, and he said to the brethren, "If any one should be seated quietly and should hear the voice of a bird, his heart will not have the same rest, and how much more shall we be disturbed by the sound of these reeds †!" Alas! the calm and silence of nature is exposed to worse interruption. History and experience teach how insecure is all its peace. Mark poor Cicero writing these words:—"Ego volebam loco magis deserto esse in Epiro, quò neque Hispo veniret, neque milites ‡." Or hear St. Isidore of Damietta writing to the magistrate Calliopius:—"We have fled from cities on account of the troubles in them; and yet your persecutions have caused us to find in our solitude the same troubles that we had hoped to avoid. The magistrates who are bound to give peace to the people now change solitudes into cities by the commotions which they cause, and make us to pass our life in tears and sorrow."

The country therefore, by what it yields and by what it refuses, directs us to that peace within the Catholic Church which the world in its fairest forms can never give, and which it often cruelly and designedly takes away.

The beauty of the world again directs us to the Catholic

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* Ovid. Met. viii. 8. † Pelagius Diaconus de vita SS. Patrum, c. 2.
‡ Epist. xiv. 1.

Church, which rejects as falsehood the teaching of those who forbid its imitation in regard to faith, as contrary to the purity of divine worship. Our Lord, "mundum mente gerens pulchrum, pulcherrimus ipse [*]", praises the lily of the field, and recognizes thus the innocence of our admiring beauty of form and of colour in other holy things; for flowers are holy things, as poets wisely say, and until these latter times of heretical insanity, no one ever persecuted them. Return, Sicilian muse, and call the vales, and bid them hither cast their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues. Drexelius represents the rose addressing its beholder, saying, "See how against the injuries of night I close my contracted globe, and again unfold its beauty at the rising sun. Mark how admirable is the order, colour, form, and odour of my leaves, and when you would praise me, refer your love and wonder to my Maker [†]."

"Along some lonelier path are strewed
Gentle Forget-me-nots,—Campanula and Bee-orchis;
The wild Rose breathes its fragrancy abroad
As if 'twas made to cheer us.
In every thing is nature like a home
Fraught with the offices of sister's ready love [‡];"

and would you find short the long Midsummer-day, choosing the colours or the forms that can charm most the eye? Then accept the poet's invitation:—

"Come, gather the Flowers, the beautiful Flowers,
  That gleam on the woodland, the hill, and the plain;
How swift fly the hours, while roaming the bowers,
  To make up our nosegays in fair St. Germain! [§]"

Still we can taste Adam's joy in Paradise, which was "to mark at dawn and evening how nature paints and disposes all her tints." Witness—

"Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in her, blooms forth to man restored."

And what is it to be thus reminded of our eternal home!—

"Quæ loca! quas olim sedes! quæ regna pararat
Omnipotens! ut belle, ut suaviter omnia rident!
O miserum mortale genus, quæ dira cupido
Hinc procul exegit! Juvat omnem abstergere curam;
Respirare auram juvat, et dare lumina circum [‖]."

But every where, as Drexelius asks, what beauty in the variety of plants, herbs, flowers, and animals! what beauty in the mountain tops, the sunny valleys, the umbrageous woods, in the foun-

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[*] Boecii iii. de Cons. [†] Rosæ select. Virt. Dei mat. 5. [‡] Morris.
[§] Cayley Shadwell. [‖] Thomas Ceva, Jesus Puer, lib. v.

tains, lakes, and rivers! what loveliness in the banks and meadows, in the gardens over-hanging rocks, and in the fields of waving corn*!

What a consoling influence again have certain places! assuaging the passions and directing the mind from bitter to sweet thoughts, like faith herself and Catholicity.

> "Oh! what a dulcet book has God provided for all!
> Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
> For sportive youth to stray in,
> For manhood to enjoy his strength,
> And age to wear away in!"

Yes, there are spots, as a French poet says, where our heart perceives a certain afflation of heaven which enchants it, such as youth dreams of,—spots clothed with a serene inexhaustible and intrinsic beauty, which pours into the soul a serious and sublime forgetfulness of all the evil that is in earth and man! Such is that valley of Tempé, where nature seems to imitate art in creating an asylum of repose and pleasure. Such that region watered by the Tagus, which was thought an image of the Elysian fields, where antiquity placed the seat of that felicity promised to the souls of the just. But even in the absence of any extraordinary charms, there are places that speak a language of consolation, peculiarly intelligible to some minds. The child has its "friendly hill" to which it loves to wander; the contemplatist, even the man most occupied, his favourite beat. Domitius Ahenobarbus, who offered a hundred million sestercii for the villa of Crassus, declared that he would not give one denarius for it, notwithstanding its magnificence and its columns of Hymettian marble, if certain trees of the Lote kind, only six in number, were excluded from the property, as the proprietor proposed; so fascinated was this senator and consul by the shade of their spreading luxuriant branches †. There was a lake from which Charlemagne could never, without a great effort, take off his eyes. There are in fact lakes pure and tranquil, as a poet says, floods of azure with so supreme a charm that incredulity itself kneels down on their shore. The shade which overspreads them would soothe remorse, if it were remediable. The consolation that their simple expanse yields is so profound that no tear has ever mingled with their wave; and yet those who watch them speak of being surprised from time to time by a short reflection on the instability of the things of this world, of which the surface of the water offers them an image. Like a page of "The Imitation,"—silent waters, isolated trees, and mute forests can thus comfort and fascinate man. How various too these impressions! Turning the face in the direction of a road

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* Rosæ select. Virt.

† Plin. H. N. lib. xvii. 1.

leading towards the south, from some region where the pale sun can hardly cast a shade, most men experience pleasure, as if they felt themselves guided to those seats of quiet, which no cold winds or showers ever disturb.

————"semperque innubilus æther
Integit, et large diffuso lumine ridet."

It is the same sensation if they look towards the east, when rosy-fingered morn paints the mountain tops; and what shall we say of climbing along the edge of those rocks that face the west, like those forming the cave of the Sphragitidian Nymphs on the side of Mount Citheron which front the setting sun? To guide our children right, a Poet says,—

"Wide be the western casement thrown
At sultry evening's fall,
The gorgeous lines be duly shewn
That weave Heaven's wondrous pall [*]."

Hear another—

"What, you are stepping westward? Yea,
I liked the greetings; 'twas a sound
Of something without place or bound:
And stepping westward seem'd to be
A kind of Heavenly destiny:
And seem'd to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.
I liked the word—and while my eye
Was fix'd upon the glowing sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way [†]."

But let the road lie towards the tyrannous breathing of the north, which shakes all our buds from growing, and lo! on the mysterious sense which waits upon the eye, how different is the impression, seeming to chase all bright summer thoughts, and upon a frozen bosom make rough winter everlasting! It is a feeling in harmony with that ancient conviction which, as Pope Innocent III. observes, gave rise to the prescription that the Gospel should be read with the face turned to the north, to show that Christ is preached especially against him who saith, Ponam sedem meam ad aquilonem, et ero similis Altissimo [‡]; for, according to the prophet, "ab aquilone pandetur omne malum super habitatores terræ [§]."

But still let us mark the guidance yielded by the sylvan scene, which, however limited, can discharge its function; ne in saltus

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[*] Lyra Inn.

[†] Wordsworth.

[‡] Isai. xiv.

[§] Hier. 1.

devios montesque eundum esset quærentibus signa, as St. Peter of Alcantara could bear witness; for he, whose cell at Coria was only four feet long and three feet wide, found signals of this kind in his garden, that had only ten feet in length and five in breadth[*]. Secreti tacita capior dulcedine ruris. What peculiar power in a book that is read while reclining on the grass beneath a serene morning sky,

ἰδὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν εὐρύν[†]·

and in the soft music heard while resting from the oar, in the light skiff drifting among the yellow flowers of the flags and the green locks of the water ranunculuses lifted by the stream!

———" Hark! the note—
The natural music of the river reed.
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes."

The pensive mood which is allied to the blessed mourning that Catholicity instils, is also inspired by the spectacle of nature. An hour before sun-rise underneath the grove of sycamore, that lies westward of Verona, Shakspeare speaks of one who might be seen walking many a morning with tears augmenting the fresh dew. We are all fashioned thus: for

———" As one who in a darksome grove
Beholds through openings, by a skilful hand
Laid bare, a vista of some spreading scene
Glowing and quivering in the fondling sun,
And as he gazes, haply kens his home,
With many a tree, the favourite of his youth,
By him distinguish'd gladly from afar;
So yearns the soul to list to nature's plaint
Until she understand such mysteries
As once were swiftly learnt, ere man had left
His native Paradise[‡]."———

Besides, nature in a thousand objects—the odour of a violet, the form of a flower, " that bright remembrancer of youth," the point of a river's bank, the willow trunk that leans from it, can recall past days, departed friends, disappointed hopes, perhaps. What soft pensive eloquence too in the aspect of the sky and field, at shut of evening flowers! Hear another poet—

" Silent they sate; for evening,
And the power its glimpses bring,
Had with one awful shadow quell'd
The passion of their grief."

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[*] Marchese, vie de S. P. d'Al. lib. ii. c. 2.

[†] Il. vii.

[‡] Morris.

An hour later, and if we walk alone, how full of direction is the mute silence!

> ———"Homines, volucresque, ferásque,
> Solverat alta quies: nullo cum murmure sepes,
> Immotæque silent frondes, silet humidus aer [*]:"

But generally the air, the sounds of rural life, the music of solitary trees, all can move and persuade and dispose to thoughts accordant with Catholicism. Plato's dialogues on the laws are held on the road between Cnossa and the Cave and Temple of Jupiter. The great trees by the side offered an agreeable shade from time to time for sheltering from the heat. "It agrees," he says, "with our time of life to stop often to rest, and to enjoy the pleasure of conversation [†]." The mind is better disposed towards truth after listening to a tree waving its branches under the wind of heaven, than after hearing a sophist declaiming in a circle of his peers.

> ———"Nec amore legendi
> Silva vacat, quamquam recreando nata labori.
> Non alibi vates propiori numine Phœbus
> Afflat; et ad populum, cui fandi copia, fagos
> Agrestes inter, nemorumque silentia, discit
> Magna loqui, sontesque tonans inflectere mentes [‡]."

Harken to another French Poet singing the forest—

> "C'est un lieu sainct, c'est un auguste temple
> De quelque part que mon œil le contemple,
> Temple vrayment, vray sejour d'oraison,
> Faict pour prier en chacune saison.
> Car à prier quiconque veult apprendre
> Doit à l'écart l'occasion surprendre.
> Ainsi les Pauls, les bons perès des bois
> Cachent ici leur prière et leur croix.
> O que mieaux vault dans un sombre sejour,
> S' arrester court que de flotter toujour [§]."

Even the moderns hear a voice like this. "The first time I had a conservation with Lord Byron on religion," says Count Gamba, "was on a fine day in spring, at Ravenna, my native country, while we were riding on horseback, in an extensive solitary wood of pines. The scene invited to religious meditation." Do you mark how he hears the voice?

> 'Αδὺ δὲ τῷ θέρεος παρ' ὕδωρ ῥέον αἰθριοκοιτεῖν.

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[*] Met. vii. 4. [†] De leg. 1.
[‡] Vanier. Præd. Rustic. 1.
[§] Le Vasseur, Le Bocage de Jossigny, 1608.

How sweet to lie in the open air in summer near a stream, between banks on either side, painted with spring: so says another poet, adding, incredible, "how fair!" and yet he concludes, "I feel most vain all hope but love." Why this sudden transition? It is that nature proclaims her own insufficiency, that she acknowledges her need of a new voice, pronouncing a blessing; she sends us therefore to the Catholic Church, which by her processions and her benedictions restores the ancient harmony. Yes, to enjoy nature, men must combine it with what is above nature, as Catholicism prescribes. Thus Parthenius Giannettasius, in his description of the beauties of the territory of Sorrentum, where he spent a summer, begins each morning by alluding to his having first duly recited his priestly office generally before light, and the praises of blessed Mary, and then relates his walks to the caves and gardens on the shore, and how he closed each excursion with vespers, often sung aloud with other priests, his visitors, in alternate chorus, all having the sacred words by heart *.

The fate of those who rest with nature unsanctified, is shown in parabolic language by St. Ephrem. "Two men," he says, "were travelling to a certain town thirty stadia distant, and after proceeding two or three stadia, they came to a delightful shady place, near fountains, very cool and beautiful. One of them, however, always fixed on his aim, pursued his way and arrived safely; the other lay down and slept, and was devoured by a wild beast, which dragged him into its den. So it is on the way of life. Some are attracted by short delights, and the demon makes them his prey †."

Pliny the naturalist had many avenues leading to truth on his perambulations: but, instead of following them, he slept at each entrance. He saw that "all things seem to be created for the sake of men ‡," but he lay down to sleep there: he saw that it was impossible sufficiently to admire the providence of nature §, but he went no farther: he saw that there was "a sacred parent of all things, ever providing remedies for man ||," but because he adopted the dogmas of Epicurus, he proceeded not to acknowledge and adore God the creator; and so at last, as if by a mysterious and appropriate judgment while invoking not God, but fortune, saying "fortes fortuna juvat," he was devoured alive by that very nature which he worshipped. There are other directions to the church yielded by natural scenery.

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* Æstates Surrentinæ, lib. iii. 3, 5; lib. i, 6.

† S. Ephr. Tract. Attende tibi ipsi, c. 2.

‡ Nat. Hist. lib. xxxvi. 1.

§ Ib. lib. xxii. 7.

|| Ib. lib. xxiv. 1.

The Catholic religion requires that the soul should be susceptible of solemn feelings, that it should have been deeply moved by a grave impression; and there are certain places which by producing this impression prepare men for the faith. Bellarmin supposes, and in that respect he is unlike St. Ambrose [*], that desert and savage places, wild mountains, woody valleys, inaccessible rocks and precipices, would create deformity in a perfect scene such as heaven; "omnis hæc infelicitas," he says, "longissime abesse debet à felicitate sanctorum [†]." Be that as it may, they are admirably adapted, here below on earth, to guide man on his pilgrimage. He needs to be awakened, to be awed, to be reminded of lessons on the cross; and therefore those who study the georgics of the mind will repeat the Virgilian lines—

——————— "juvat arva videre,
Non rastris hominum, non ulli obnoxia curæ.
Ipsæ Caucaseo steriles in vertice silvæ,
Quas animosi Euri assiduè franguntque feruntque,
Dant alios àliæ fetus, dant utile lignum [‡]."

The beginning of wisdom can be made amid the solemn scenery of a desert, where nothing exists but the forces of creation—where no power, no will, has modified the works of the power and will of God—where glaciers and granite are tossed about like the fragments of a broken world—where nature in wild magnificence, careless of mortal admiration, lavishes her grandest forms far from the observation of men. Hear Manfred—

——————— "ye toppling crags of ice,
Ye avalanches whom a breath draws down
In mountainous overwhelming ———————
The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell."

Not there will he deny what men in cabinets will often question. Whence the strange intense delight of some to see the gigantic forms of elementary destruction on some peak, where they can cite such lines as—

"From age to age, amid his lonely bounds,
The crash of ruin awfully resounds;
Mysterious havoc! but severe his brow
Where daylight lingers 'mid perpetual snow."

It is from the need of solemn feelings, raising man above the earth and time, that scenes like these are loved. "Onager," as

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[*] 1 Hex. c. 8.
[†] De æterna felicitate sanctorum, 1.
[‡] ii. 44.

Job says, "contemnit civitatem et monachus communem secularium civium conversationem*." Such is man too, though unhooded; and this love points to the Catholic Church; for besides that her doctrines constitute the fountain of all that is solemn and sublime in thought, sooner or later he learns the truth expressed by Ives de Chartres, that "neither the secret depths of woods, nor the tops of mountains, make man blessed if he has not with him solitude of mind, the sabbath of the heart, tranquillity of conscience, and ascensions in the heart; without which indolence of mind, curiosity, vain glory, and a crowd of perilous temptations accompany all solitude†." "Our Lord chose for the scene of his temptation," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "not a voluptuous paradise, but a desert where the demon could not easily find arms. No fruits there; no apples, no delights, not another Eve; and so, because he can find nothing else, he turns himself to stones‡." The desert therefore has lessons to warn men from the temptations of life. Are you led into one of the gorges of Mount Ossa, where the Titans were fabled to have fought with heaven?—amidst those ruins of the earth, those foaming torrents, those enormous crags menacing, or already fallen, have you not a lively image of men's impossibilities when they quarrel with the great opposeless will? Natural to man is love for the wild beauties of the visible world; what a passion has the artist to trace huge forests, infamous hills, and unharboured heaths; and far beyond, to wander where—

> "The mossy tracks made by the goat and deer,
> Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year,
> Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls."

Not in cities and in clubs—

> "Not there! but in dark wood and rocky cave,
> And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill
> With omnipresent murmur as they rave
> Down their steep beds that never shall be still."

Here, in this school sublime, he studies. For some not even those vast plains of old Castille, which inspire the soul with such ineffable sadness, are without a charm and a voice instructive. Far from them the complaint—

> "Aspicere est nudos sine fronde, sine arbore campos.
> Heu! loca felici non adeunda viro§!"

They see tints, shades, and gleams, answering to the subdued tones of Catholicity, solemn lines and harmonious guidance pointing to it every where. Like the greatest painters too, we

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[*] S. Isidori de Summo Bono, lib. iii. 17.

[†] Ivon. Carnot. Epist. 192.

[‡] Dom. I. in Quad. Serm.

[§] Ovid, Trist. iii. 10.

may observe, they do not require Alpine snows and giant mountains. A slight undulation satisfies them; and, in truth, to see at evening the vast open lands of a champaign country, sloping gently down into valleys, as the whole ground, taking its tone from heaven, covers itself with a rich dark veil after sunset in the autumn season, fills the mind with a calm peace and an ineffable sweetness, as if it heard "Te lucis ante terminum" sung by holy choirs. It is a lovely page of nature's book, full of parallel passages to many sacred texts of Catholicity.

On the canvass of a Claude, a Van de Veld, or a Ruysdaël, what eloquence do we find borrowed from the common aspect of natural scenery! A pool at the skirts of a wood, a sandy plain, a winding path, an old trunk with a few half-dead branches, a beech blasted by lightning and fallen into a torrent, a tree prostrate in a forest, a passenger in the distance—nothing more is wanting to furnish a lesson that many of course will never read, but which is not the less full of mystery, full of tenderness. In fine, a love of rural impressions, with the innocence they involve, seems to point significantly to that Catholic Church, which shows by her sacraments, her doctrines, and her practice, how merciful is God! prompting the poet's words—

"If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,
And solemn midnight's tingling silentness;
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,
And winter robing with pure snow and crowns
Of starry ice, the gray grass and bare boughs
Of spring's delicious painting has been dear to me;
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
I consciously have injured, but still loved—
O then receive me to thy gracious breast:"

as one that must love thee the Antitype, the Sanctifier of all, that dost best interpret—that dost transform into unchangeable realities—that dost bless and pity all. But if the visible world has this secret, inexplicable, and mysterious voice to guide men to the Catholic Church, it has also another more intelligible language to effect the same object, which consists in the analogies and symbols in which it is so fruitful. The Church employs it for this purpose, teaching, as Cardinal Bona says, by her symbolic theology the proper use of sensible things*. "The objects of external nature," as a recent author observes, "are filled with a sort of symbolical theology, and elevated into the Catholic ritual. Earth's mysteries are sufficiently interpreted to enable us to consecrate common objects, and through them our daily

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* Via Compend. ad Deum.

life, which lies among common objects*." Waters, for instance, to the Catholic lover of nature are symbols of baptism, of the effusion of the Holy Ghost, of the preaching of the Gospel, and of the conversion of nations; such are the rivers of the terrestrial paradise fertilizing their banks; the twelve sources of Elim, which form a delightful oasis in the desert traversed by Israel—Endor, Engaddi, and all other fountains mentioned in the Scriptures; Moses found among the bulrushes of the Nile; the spouse of Isaac shown to Isaac near the drinking place†. In the office of the consecration of a church, water is thus qualified, "trodden once by the feet of Christ, pressed in mountains and not confined, dashed among rocks and not broken, spread over the earth and never-failing—which, borne in the clouds, falleth thence to render the ground fruitful—which, to the exhausted bodies of all creatures, is sweet and grateful, and salutary to life—whose bounds are unknown, but whose virtue is familiar to all—symbolical of that grace which brings refreshment and life to the human soul‡." The forest, too, has at least one grand lesson of this kind, in its wood, which represents the cross. "In wood the people, thoughtful and observant, are taught to discern a prophetic symbol—the tree of life, the ark which saves from the deluge, the wood prepared for the sacrifice of Isaac, the rod of Moses and Aaron, the wood which corrects the bitterness of the waters§." The symbolical lessons of nature as taught by the Catholic Church, and by her alone, since now without her influence, "omnium utilitatum rapacissimi," as Pliny says, we employ the natural world with a view to all utility, even in a thousand ways provoking death, and using it for every purpose but that of guiding us to the truths which it can represent, constitute a kind of instruction which is to many intelligible, though not indeed understood by all; for as a poet asks—

——————— "will the eye that throbs
With evil glance or foul imagining,
So tranquil fix its gaze on little flowers,
Or trembling dew-drops, as to see the types
In true relations ‖?"

In a Pagan Bucolic of the fifth century, Christ is spoken of thus:—

"Magnis qui colitur solus in urbibus."

The rustics were still Pagans. Alas! in some regions those who converse with seeds, and trees, and flowers, are not much

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* Faber.

† P. Cahier M. de Bourges, p. 75.

‡ Pontific. Rom.

§ Monog. de Bourges, 42.

‖ Morris.

raised above if they have not even sank below them. Wha will he read in nature's book, who, with the old poet, omittin only his first words, "Luce deos oro," might describe, like him his own rural life thus,—

> "Rure morans quid agam, respondeo pauca, rogatus,
> Prandeo, poto, cano, ludo, lavo, cœno, quiesco ?"

But all are not such: there are who—

> ———————— "when, as at early morn,
> They in their garden nurslings sprinkle o'er
> With clinging water, ere the quickening rays
> Fall on their tender frames, will contemplate,
> And then will think of that eternal Sun,
> Which soon will open plants their heavenly Sire
> Has planted." ————

The very sources from which he draws the water, teach an remind him of truths relating to the soul. And how multiplie are these sources over the thirsty earth! "Spain," says Marineus Siculus, "is refreshed with innumerable fountains. At Granada, within a space of twenty-five thousand paces, there are no fewer than thirty-six fountains*." How many of those tha rise up in the woods are endowed with healing properties, like that which Laurea Tullius graced with an inscription, that seems expressly worded to serve a higher purpose than he had in view for at all these springs may we not read such lines as his at Puteoli, directing us to the Church and to her discourse,—

> "Hic etiam apparent lymphæ non ante repertæ,
> Languida quæ infuso lumina rore levant.
> Ut, quoniam totum legitur sine fine per orbem,
> Sint plures, oculis quæ medeantur, aquæ ?"

But to consider gardening alone, a recent horticulturist remarks, that "he never knew an instance in which the pursuit did not either find men temperate and virtuous, or make them so;" that is, I suppose it will be admitted, apt for receiving or retaining the truths of Catholicity. "The herbs and flowers bring down not alone," as Pliny says, "the sun and stars to earth, by means of their mysterious sympathy with them," but the divine truths which they are made to represent. You have more than the Pleiads at your feet; for, thanks to symbols and to ancient names, "you need not even raise your eyes from the ground to see heaven†." The mere shepherd lad of small regard to see too, yet well skilled in every virtuous plant and healing herb that spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray, will be

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* De Reb. Hisp. lib. 1.

† Nat. Hist. xviii. 67.

able from each flower, from little seeds or high-grown trees, to learn mysteries of grace. Does not even Virgil say—

"Hoc pinguem et placitam paci nutritor olivam *?"

———————— "I have a boy;
I found him sitting by a fountain's side,
A garland lay him by, made by himself
Of many several flowers, bud in the bay,
Stuck in that mystic order, that the rareness
Delighted me. ————
Then took he up his garland, and did shew
What every flower, as country people hold,
Did signify;—and to my thoughts did read
The prettiest lecture of his country art
That could be wished †."————

The little forest flowers contained a rich store of holy thought for those who sought them, halting among the green mosses, "when faith," as a poet says, "had found a heritage in the wild tangled woods." Many now speak of the language of flowers, but if it be well interpreted, what does it more clearly proclaim than the truths which are comprised in the instruction of the Catholic Church? Are not all its symbols concerned with purity, with humility, with hope, with gratitude, with joy, with everlasting life?—

"There's rosemary, that is for remembrance;
And there's pansies, that is for thoughts."

"The violet," says our proverbial philosopher, "that lieth lowly on the ground, beloved and lovely, is for humility." "I know a brook," another says, "along whose mossy banks many a hermit flower is found—

———— deep secluded, where
None knew their being, save the prying air,
That is their faithful confidant, and tells
The fragrant sighs he heard within their cells."

And besides, let the object of your love be what it may, for what hand could you better destine these sweet wild flowers, to cull which you have climbed through rocks and dared the yawning gulfs, than for that of our Lady, whom, if you deny not Christ, you must call ever-blessed; on whose image, placed to express your gratitude, they will never wither, like poor Ophelia's violets, never be forgotten, much less become, to your memory as poisoned coronets, like those that Cleopatra wore, to kill those who drank from them? Therefore in the poet's charming song, that begins, "Bring flowers, young flowers,

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* Georg. ii. 425.

† Beaumont and F.

after culling them for the festal board, for the conqueror's path. for the captive's cell, for the bride, and for the bier, the last lines are these—

"Bring flowers to the shrine where we kneel in prayer ;
They are nature's offering, their place is there !
They speak of hope to the fainting heart,
With a voice of promise they come and part."

Cornelius Scipio, in his first triumph over Hannibal, ordered all the soldiers of the eighth legion to carry roses in their hands; and the other Scipio Æmilianus, after destroying Carthage. ordered the soldiers of the eleventh legion to carry roses and bear them on their shields. Catholicity finds out a better use for the loveliest of flowers, teaching us to place them on our altars, and to strew the ground with them before the blessed sacrament. We read of a certain young scholar, very devout to the blessed Virgin, and afterwards a prior, who had a custom of weaving circlets of sweet flowers, with which he used to adorn her image in the church. His parents having placed him in a monastery, the confinement of the cloistral discipline prevented him from continuing his favourite pastime. The prior observing his concern, asked him why he wept ; to whom he replied, "I used to make garlands of flowers for the blessed Virgin, and I grieve that I cannot do so any longer." The prior consoled him by observing, "that the sweetest gift is to repeat the rosary with a devout heart*." But there must have been some other reason besides the cloistral discipline which kept him from the floral school, for no men more than monks were skilled in it. "Notwithstanding the hardness of our rocks," says Dom Louis Montegut, "the wild pinks, roses, and violets, flower all the year round on Mount Serrat†." The novices there, with the little pages of our Lady that we met before, might compose garlands as they liked. The venerable father Alphonso Cremona of the Cross, of the convent of the order of Mercy at Ezija in Andalousia, is described as "loving every plant, and herb, and blossom, from finding that each natural object could elevate his mind to God. The least flower of the field used to produce this effect on him, so that he was frequently seen holding one in his hand while in an ecstasy‡." The wild flowers, from the daffodils that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty, to the marjoram and marigold of middle summer, have a peculiar dialect, as St. Thomas of Villanova distinguishes; for, after citing the words of divine wisdom, "Ego flos campi et lilium convallium," he adds, "of the field, not of the garden, not

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* Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, 409.
† Hist. de Notre Dame du Mont Serrat, 3.
‡ Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 663.

private, not secret, not appropriated to a few, but public, common to all, exposed to all. I deny myself to no one; I offer myself to all; I give myself to whoever wishes. Every one may gather me, and be satiated with my perfume. I am the lily of the valley; I fly the hard mountains; I am found in the low moist valley. If any one be little and humble, he will find me in his heart*." Such thoughts can direct the little maiden as in the grove she wanders; like her the poet speaks of—

> "Ludit, et aut violas, aut candida lilia carpit;
> Dumque puellari studio calathosque sinumque
> Implet, et æquales certat superare legendo †."

What sweet lessons then of Catholicity in the spots the poet speaks of,—

> "Where grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
> Daisies, those pearl'd arcturi of the earth,
> The constellated flower that never sets;
> Faint oxlips, tender blue-bells, at whose birth
> The sod scarce heaved, and that tall flower that wets
> Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
> When the low wind its playmate's voice it hears!"

But all flowers are intelligible thus. Hear an old French poet—

> "Plus volontiers l'homme aux bois se pourmeine,
> Dans les jardins l'amour des fleurs ameine,
> Le cœur Nimphal, ce sexe craint les bois
> Lieux pleins d'horreur; où logent mille effrois."

Then, after observing how each flower can teach a lesson of piety and grace, he ends thus:—

> "Donq' l'incarnat d'une fleur tost ravie,
> C'est le miroir de nostre courte vie,
> Vie qui naist, qui croist, et qui fleurit
> Comme la rose et aussi tost flestrit ‡."

Flowers are but for a day, "magna ut palam est," says Pliny, "admonitione hominum, quæ spectatissime floreant, celerrime marcescere." Volcamerus wrote over his garden-door these lines—

> "Hortule noster amor, quoties tua germina reddis,
> Surgere sic tumulis corpora nostra doces;
> Nam si quis putridas videat revirescere plantas,
> Cur dubitet cineres surgere posse suos?
> Felix in fragili qui discit talia flore,
> Qui vero in Christo, terque quaterque magis §."

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* In Cant. c. 11. † Ovid, Met. v. 11.

‡ Le Vasseur, le Bocage de Jossigny.

§ Jacob. de Richebourcq Ultima Verba ac.

The succession of seasons prompts a crowd of ideas of the same order, relative to the operations of grace within the Church.

"The blasts of autumn drive the winged seeds
Over the earth—next come the snows, and rain,
And frosts, and storms, which dreary winter leads
Out of his Scythian cave, a savage train:
Behold! spring sweeps over the world again,
Shedding soft dews from her ætherial wing!
Flowers on the mountains, fruits over the plain,
And music on the waves and woods she flings,
And love on all that lives, and calm on lifeless things."

The last leaf in autumn that clings to the bough—image of the friend remembered not in desolate old age—disposes another poet to moralize, singing thus like a child, and taxing not the elements with unkindness:

"There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can;
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig, that looks at the sky."

The storms of winter dispose a Spanish historian to meditate on the lamentations of lost or suffering souls: "Of late it has continually rained over this city," writes Marineus Siculus to his friend Velascus, "which weather has greatly distressed me. Nothing incommodes me more; for I can not hear without pain these great sounds in the air, like the sad voices of lamenting spirits, which day and night so pursue me, that I can scarcely hear any one speaking*." What a voice in the tempest, and the thunder that confounds the pride of man! and how awful the groans of the vexed wilderness, seeming to announce the last convulsions and agony of nature; when tallest pines, though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks bow their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts, or fall upon the ground, uptorn? "There," says Lear, "I found who were my deceivers—there I smelt them out." There are moments when, moved by nature's language, even the profane traveller becomes grave and thoughtful, and in some sort armed against the sophistry of the passions.

"Truce to our sports this night, he cries;
What if our homeward road we miss?
My friends, I like not scowling skies
In such a wilderness as this."

Baptist, the Mantuan, points out many harmonies between the seasons and the mysteries which are appointed to them by the

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* Epist.

Catholic Church, as in the circumstance remarked by Dom Gueranger, that "it is when the days are shortest and the light least, that the Church celebrates the advent of Christ, as if to represent that dark period of the world, when, as St. Bernard says, the sun of justice had almost disappeared, and only a faint gleam, and a dying warmth remained on earth*."

The Abbot Rupert makes a similar remark, "Easter," he says, "is celebrated at the first full moon after the vernal equinox, which usage contains a mystery: for the moon, not having light of itself, but receiving all its illumination from the sun, signifies the holy Church; which, not from herself, but from the true sun, Christ, receives the grace of internal light: but the season of the equinox being complete, after which the days grow longer than the nights, which become short, signifies that after the night of ignorance the day of the knowledge of God begins to be extended with long serenity, and the labour of those knowing the truth of God diminishes the multitude of the ignorant†."

Baptist, the Mantuan, too, says of the spring, still with the same avenue before him:

——"Jam redeunt clementia sidera: vernum
Tempus adest, prodite domo: per rura volucres
Apricantur; humus virides jam cogitat herbas.
Hac quoque luce ferunt longo quasi frigore functos,
Vadere per sepes et per dumeta lacertos‡."

For all this has its symbolic language, as Rupertus shows, saying, "The elements themselves also conspire to enhance the Paschal joy; for, after the asperity of winter, the soft air now breathes vernal sweetness, and the earth, after being decrepit with steril cold, grows young again, and puts forth herbs and flowers, while the birds of the air make sweet melody. Thus amidst the joys which we celebrate while beholding these things, we ought, from what is visible, to find a certain similitude to invisible things, wrought by the resurrection of Christ, namely—how the world flourishes again in the beauty of faith and virtues after the cold of perfidy and the showers of vices. Whence, it is said in the Canticles, Jam enim hyems transiit, imber abiit et recessit, flores apparuerunt, vinæ florentes odorem dederunt, et vox turturis audita est in terra nostra. Therefore, a consideration of the very season adds somewhat to pious joy§."

The sun itself, combined with the rock of the eagle's nest, has its religious symbolism, to teach that those are degenerate and base who do not steadily regard Him, whose representative

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* Année Liturgique. † De div. officiis, vi. c.
‡ Bapt. Mant. De sacris diebus.
§ Rupert Abb. De divinis officiis, lib. vi. c. 27.

it is. David, the Monk of Claustra, says Cæsarius, used often, while sitting in the fields, to fix his eyes like an eagle upon the sun. Our seniors say they have often seen him thus contemplating it. If God conferred such virtue on his fleshly eyes, what will he not grant to those of his glorified body *?

But let us hear a poet who truly reads the symbolic page of nature:—

"Go to the forest in a shining night,
And see how teems its bosom with new life;
Who can not tell of many a summer's ramble,
When he has broken off his comrade's talk,
That he might turn and see the rising moon;
And light and shade profusely did she throw
Over the wavy trees, until they moved
With gracefulness that seem'd above their own.
Nor was it only on the stately trees,
Nor on the dew-clad herbs or tingling stream,
Or wider river, or the bosom large
Of restless ocean, nor the towering height
Of craggy mountains, robed with majesty;
Nor on the lofty church, or on house
For hospitable ancestry beloved,
That thus the moon with magic power rests
And clothes them with a grandeur of her own.
But every little stone upon the way,
Each landmark set to guide the traveller;
Each straw-built hut, or stile that checks the path,
Or crazy barn or rick by rustics trimm'd,
Has given to it soft and touching shades:
The moon expressive smiles on little things;
Nor needs the mind a guiding hand to point
How she is faithful counterpart in this
Of the all-consecrating Church †."

The Abbot Rupert points out the same analogy. "As the moon," he says, "requires always the benefit of the sun, having of itself no light, so the holy Church, amidst the wanings, defects, and various labours of the present life, has constant need of being visited and renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it turns daily to the countenance of the Divinity, and returns thanks for his benefits, as in the celebration where it confesses it to be meet and right always, and in all places, to give him thanks. Thus, like the moon, does it direct the face of its heart to the sun, that from the spirit of sanctification it may begin what has perhaps not yet had a beginning, and perfect by additions what it has already received ‡."

The mutability of objects in the visible world supplies another

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* Cæs. Heisterbach, Illust. Mirac. et Hist. Mem. lib. xii. c. 35.

† Morris.

‡ Rup. Ab. de divinis officiis, lib. x. 9.

symbol, which points to the Catholic Church as the only region that bears undecaying and eternal fruits. Mountains are precipitated, islands lost, lakes filled up, the course of rivers turned, forests swept away. O what ruins are in nature! this great world shall so wear out to nought. Pliny remarks, in his age, a marvellous ruin and transformation as occurring in the Marrucin land, where an olive grove descended on the public way, while fields, on the contrary, came to where the olive grove had been[*]. In latter times, human industry conspires with time to change the face of every locality, so that, in regard to this lesson, we are more abundantly provided than the ancients, who did not suffer from so combined an action. Near the city of Camarina was a marsh which Apollo had forbidden the inhabitants to drain, whence Virgil says,

> ——— "et fatis nunquam concessa moveri[†]."

But Midas, who indeed obtains ass's ears for his punishment, prefers Pan to Apollo[‡].

In our age no locality is sacred; not even the field where lie the bones of our ancestors, not even the spot consecrated to God is sacred. Now, more than ever, we may say

> "Jam pauca aratro jugera regiæ
> Moles relinquent[§]."

The fields and groves are changed into streets and forums, the cemeteries into houses of correction: we cannot wonder if cliffs and lakes are subjected to caprice or financial speculation. Yet the old reluctance to change what ever bore the aspect of natural inviolability, long left vestiges of its power: for, speaking of Charlemagne's project to form a navigable communication between the Rhine and the Danube by means of a canal three hundred feet wide, a writer not very ancient says that the rains and falls of earth, and groans, and sounds of laughter by night, and a thousand obstacles, caused the work to be abandoned, adding, "It even seemed that the enterprise was undertaken in despite of God, so many prodigies appeared to show that it displeased Him. On this account the undertakers, astonished as if by a miracle, persuaded the king to order the works to cease, as offensive to God;" and so, he adds, "the face which nature had given to this quarter of the earth remained such as it had been from the creation, as is generally the result in all similar enterprises."

The same writer, speaking of other great projects of canals,

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[*] Nat. Hist. xvii. 38.

[†] iv. 700.

[‡] Ov. Met. xi. 6.

[§] Hor. Od. ii. 12.

says, "I remember seeing a plan proposed to the council of King Henry III., which was defeated in like manner; for it would seem as if God took pleasure in hindering these correctors of nature, sending difficulties in their way so great that they are always constrained to abandon their works unfinished, as it happened to our Charlemagne [*]." We smile at such passages; and yet it is no less true, that the mutations wrought on earth by time or human hands, have a certain voice which the rudest can sometimes hear. Formerly some objects of natural beauty were secure. "Proceeding from the city," says Virgil, "you find an ancient temple, and near it an old cypress,"—

"Religione patrum multos servata per annos [†]."

The platanus, which Menelaus, being about to besiege Troy, planted in Arcadia, near a fountain, remained to the time of Pausanias, who cites other trees of vast antiquity, as the ozier in the temple of Juno at Samos, the oak of Dodona, the olive in the citadel of Athens, and the palm of Delos [‡]. In Biscay the oak of Guernica is, perhaps, yet standing. But in these days there can be no dependence on the durability of objects that we love in nature; the trees at all events fail us.

"O! ubi nunc virides umbræ tacitique recessus,
Qui tantos aluere viros!———
Sed quid inhumanas contra potuere secures
Carmina [§]?"

There was an oak, itself a grove, una nemus, under whose spreading branches I had sat and read old books each day during two summers. No repose like this under the greenwood tree. Here the ancients would have thought the Dryads led the festal dance; for under no other shade on all that common was the grass so delicate. If unacquainted with enterprising men of money, who, as Pliny says of Nero, accelerate the death even of trees, one might have thought that it would have outlived generations yet unborn, like the lofty chestnut, with deep roots, proof against the wintry tempest, that Virgil describes,

——— "immota manet, multosque per annos
Multa virûm volvens durando secula vincit [||]."

To me it was like already an old friend: though I did not, like Papienus Crispus, the consul, kiss it and embrace it, as he used to do the beech tree on the Tusculan hill, I used to lie under it,

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[*] Le President Fauchet, Fleur de la Maison de Charlemagne, 106.
[†] ii. 715.
[‡] lib. viii.
[§] Vanierius, Præd. Rust. 1.
[||] Georg. ii. 295.

and feel transported to Camaldoli and Vallambrosa, and even talk to it as many have talked to trees, like Perigone, daughter of Sinnis, who flying from Theseus, after he had slain her father, implored the thorns and wild asparagus, as if they could hear, to screen her from view, promising in return never to cut them more, for which reason the Toxides, as sprung from her, respected these poor plants. Alas! on my return, after an absence of some months, I found that less gentle visitors than even Shakespear's duke, who would drink under this tree, had been to that spot; for the mayor of the adjacent town, like another Erisichthon, had profanely cut it down. One day carelessly he sent his wood-cutter,

> "Et nemora evertit multos ignava per annos,
> Antiquasque domos avium cum stirpibus imis
> Eruit * ;"

I came but in time to see the ground strewed with some naked branches, and the last waggon that was employed in their removal. Thus was I directed to a better and more lasting shade.

Another great voice from the scenery and changes of the visible world is that produced by its association with ideas of a religious and historical order, which centre in the Catholic Church, attesting such a mighty change from these wretched times, when the stars of heaven were only employed to recall the memory of Jupiter's intrigues. Catholicity, not alone by its monuments, but also by its immortal remembrances, has become incorporated with every thing we see around, above, and below us, since the very star-paved milky way in heaven is called El Camino de Santiago, and the veins in the bowels of the earth, as at Almaden, are distinguished by the names of saints.

Who can pass through rocks and mountains, and not read, as if graven on the crag, glories of the ancient saints and religious orders that were cradled amongst them? Of Catholicity we may say, transferring Pliny's words, "Dat vocem saxis, respondentem homini, immo vero et obloquentem." Even the stones which we tread upon, when transported to cities to form footways around open spaces, remind me of the monks and hermits upon the mountains, with whom I have so often walked, contemplating on glittering granite thus:—How many objects in nature can thus direct us to holy men of Catholic times, who said, with the brethren of Grandmont,

> "Vosque adeo salvete urbes, longumque valete †,"

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* Georg. ii. 19.

† F. Lavesque, Annales ordinis Grandimontis, cent. 1.

not like the weak poet in his exile, who exclaims,

> "O! quater, et quoties non est numerare, beatum
> Non interdictâ cui licet urbe frui *."

The Catholic religious man resembles rather the ideal portrait which that poet loves to paint,

> "Oderat hic urbes, nitidâque remotus ab aulâ,
> Secretos montes, et inambitiosa colebat
> Rura; nec Iliacos cœtus, nisi rarus, adibat †."

Who can traverse forests, so many of which had their tutelar saints, as that of Windsor, which recalled St. Leonard, and not be reminded generally by them all of that great St. Bernard, who so often left the silence of the cloister and the august majesty of temples, in order to contemplate the book of nature in the desert, or, as he says himself, in the woods of Beech?

If, like Jaques le Vasseur, as indicated by his book, Le Bocage de Jossigny, you dearly love groves, the Church has limed a bush for you, and placed a choir of such enticing birds that you will light to listen to their lays; for then you cannot but sympathise with men like monks, who are so identified with them, and who had the same passions as yourself; for each could have evinced his familiarity with them like Phocus, when seeing the spear of his guest,

> "Sum nemorum studiosus, ait, cædisque ferinæ,
> Quâ tamen a silvâ teneas hastile recisum,
> Jamdudum dubito; certe, si fraxinus esset,
> Fulva colore foret; si cornus, nodus inesset;
> Unde sit ignoro ‡."——

"Your letters smell of the forest," says Pope Leo X., writing to Egidius of Viterbo, general of the Augustinians, "and shed the odour of the shade and of the charming spot in which your convent is placed.—Silvas et rura colebat." So, too, St. Paulinus, writing to a holy friend, says, "Knowing that not what pleases men, but what pleases God, is holy and innocent, et ideo rarus urbium frequentator, familiare secretum taciti ruris adamasti—not ceasing thereby to be useful to the Church. Arbitror autem idipsum majoribus Ecclesiæ utilitatibus præparari, quod salubri consilio instructioni sanctæ vacas, intentus studiis spiritalibus, quibus solitudo amica est §."

The navigator cannot touch at islands in the farthest ocean without being obliged to repeat the names of canonized saints:

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[*] Ovid, Trist. iii. 12.
[†] Met. xi. 20.
[‡] Ovid, Met. vii. 17.
[§] Div. Paulini Epist. xxix. ad Aprum.

for the Spanish Catholics, who in general were the first to visit them, never thought of associating them with their own memory. The island of Guanahami, which was the first land discovered by Columbus, was called by him San-Salvador, which recalls the piety of the discoverers, whose success is announced in the celebrated drama of Lopez de Vega, by hearing the Te Deum chanted by the sailors. In the woods and mountains the beauties of nature are so associated with the loves and haunts of holy men of the Catholic Church, that the involuntary exclamation even of men separated from her fold, on visiting any spot of extraordinary attractions, is, How well suited would be this site for a monastery!—being thus, in spite of themselves, directed by such scenes to thoughts that centre in peace and love, and so unlike those Virgilian associations, as expressed in the lines—

"Est curvo anfractu vallis accommoda fraudi
Armorumque dolis; quam densis frondibus atrum
Urget utrinque latus; tenuis quò semita ducit,
Angustæque ferunt fauces, aditusque maligni [*]."

The poet says, "I learnt to summon forth from nature's stores remembrances." Truly they abound in them. A rural walk can of itself suggest even the memory of those charters familiar with all persons conversant with antiquity, in which the founders and benefactors of religious houses describe with such minuteness the boundaries of the grounds they give to them, following up streams with such exact local knowledge through rocks, and groves, and meadows, as in that given by the Count of Aquinum to the abbey of Mount Cassino, in which he traces the brook from the source Mellarino, on the hill side, winding by the defile of the mountains till it comes to the mount Valleluris, and thence by the other defile turning by the rocks, and descending to the oak wood, and thence passing directly to the rocky place called Arcu Giezati [†]. These men could say,

"I know each lane and every alley green,
Dingle or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from site to site,
My daily walks."

Holy men are so associated with the scenes in which they lived, that historians who mention them are obliged to describe the locality, as when St. Gregory of Tours says, "Having to speak of the blessed Priest of God, Gregorius, I think it will be agreeable to describe the site and aspect of the place in which he spent much time [‡]." About to write the lives of the bishops

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[*] Æn. xi. 522.
[†] Dom Gatula Hist. Abb. Cassinons, 1.
[‡] Hist. lib. iii. c. 19.

and abbots of Tours, another eminent author dwells upon th beauty of the province, describing the clear fountains, the nobl rivers, the solemn woods, the fruitful fields, the smiling meadow beautiful with wild flowers, the vineyards and rocky caves beneath them, as if provided by nature to keep cool their produce. Nor does he forget even the hollow reeds that line th banks of "the dear river," hujus cari fluminis,—the groves whic are enlivened with the songs of birds, and the marshes which resound at dusk with the chorus that Bacchus, in the old play, s deprecates *. As a knowledge of men thus requires a certai local knowledge reciprocally, there are few places which we ca visit or describe in any detail without being directed to the me of the Catholic Church who once inhabited them. The Saints in fact, loved nature so intensely, that we can hardly love it without feeling some affection for their memory. Shall I cite instances? One of the great enjoyments of St. Ignatius de Loyola was to walk in a meadow or garden, and observe the exquisite colours and form and odour of the flowers †. We read expressly in old books of the delight that abbots used to take in refreshing their minds with the beauty of some favourite sylvan spot within their walls, where some murmuring brook wandered through luxurious herbs and odoriferous plants ‡. Thus, of St. Gertrude we are told, "once between the Resurrection and Ascension, before prime, entering the court of the monastery. she sat near a fountain, and began to admire the beauty of the place, the limpid flowing water, the green foliage of the trees around, the freedom of the birds, and especially of the doves. that flew about; and thinking that nought was wanting but some familiar friend at that moment to share in her felicity, suddenly the Divine Presence inundated her heart with a torrent of delight, and she felt as if it was become the mansion of her God §." We read, too, of St. Anthony of Padua, that on the fifteenth day before his death, contemplating the beautiful plain of Padua from the summit of a certain hill, he exulted in spirit, and extolled the position of that city ||. St. Peter of Alcantara being made guardian of the convent of our Lady of the Angels. about three miles from Robredillo, was reconciled to the dignity by observing the sublime solitude of that house, placed in a deep valley formed by savage mountains of a prodigious height. On arriving he was consoled by the quantity of odoriferous herbs which perfumed the valley, by the abundant stream which passed

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* De Gestis Episc. Turon. et Abb. Majoris Monast.

† Le Père Bartoli, Hist. de St. Ig. liv. iv.

‡ Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, 17.

§ Insinuationes div. pietatis S. Gertrudis Abb. lib. ii. c. 3.

|| Vita S. Ant. cap. 23.

near the convent, the oaks and other trees which shaded it, and the general beauty of the spot, which elevated his soul to the Creator. He found a cavern at the bottom of the valley, into which he used to retire for prayer. In this convent he chose for himself a very narrow cell, at one end of a gallery, for the reason that it looked upon the country, and that it was there he used to spend some hours in the night *.

> "The outward shows of sky and earth,
> Of hill and valley, he has view'd;
> And impulses of deeper birth
> Have come to him in solitude."

To him we might suppose the beautiful lines of another poet made allusion:

> "Silvarum lucos circumspicit antiquarum,
> Antraque, et innumeris distinctas floribus herbas;
> Felicesque vocat pariter studiique locique
> Mæonidas †."

St. Basil, St. Augustin, Claudius Marius Victor, and many other Fathers show how deeply they could feel the beauty and the pleasures of the present scene. "The immense joy which I experience here," says De Verrolles, Apostolic Vicar of Mantchouri, "proves that the religion of the Saviour, the sacerdotal spirit and the office of apostleship, far from destroying, ennobles, perfects nature, and even augments its sensibility."

The dreams of the venerable Marina de Escobar were sometimes determined as to their form, by the love which she entertained for certain beauties of the visible world. "I dreamt," she says, on one occasion, "that I was on the banks of a certain river in Castille; for I was singularly addicted to that recreation which I used to receive from the aspect of water; I thought that my angels had said to me, 'Do you wish that we should lead you to the banks of a river where you may recreate yourself a little with that creature which God has created for the use of men?' and so they placed me on the banks of a wide river, where I saw some boys on the sand, and others in the water ‡." Indeed the Regula Magistri expressly says, "All this view of the heavenly country is taken from the beauty of the present world:—the flowers and the groves—the meadows and the streams; the cloudless serenity of the luminous air, the perfumes of every aromatic plant, the harmony of the sweetest instruments, the beauty of the most perfect forms—such is the celestial country of the saints; nam doceant vos terrena et quæ

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* Marchèse, vie du Saint, chap. ix.

† Met. v. 8.

‡ Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. v. c. 2.

sunt cælestia *." All these objects moreover seem to invok Catholicism as the source of their consecration and preservation for without it they are not allowed to fulfil their ministry : Marina de Escobar was assured, when the divine voice said her, " Look around and investigate the world ; behold the rivers and shores, these fields and woods, which I created th my creatures and my friends by enjoying them might praise an bless me as their creator, and might be consoled and delighte in me to my glory. See how these are profaned by vanities an by new and useless inventions to please the taste of worldling who search for false pleasures †." When faith withdraws, th use of nature is perverted, so that what was intended for th pleasure, serves to the affliction of men. In woods, instead hermits contemplating, and children roaming to gather flower are keepers watching, slaying or being slain. From hills wher the youth of adjacent cities used to rejoice on holydays, instea of prayer ascending to heaven, are troops fortifying and perhaps bombarding those very cities. How must nature year for the old Catholicism now, when the friends of God ar hunted from the groves and mountains where for a thousan years they had been sheltered, and when vices and sorrows i every form are made lords of the domain," according to the words of St. Bernard, " mundus est, ubi periclitantur animæ, e affliguntur corpora ?"

An ancient holy rule says, " The hermit within his enclosure should have a small garden, in which he may walk, and plant and gather herbs, and be touched by the air ;—atque ab aere tangi possit ; quia multum ei proderit tactus aeris ‡." The sam love breaks out in a letter of St. Isidore, of Damietta, where h says, " I praise you, Father, for having given us only some vegetables ; you could not inform us in a more edifying manner respecting the frugality of your life. Nothing is more agreeable to us than what grows in your garden. Your gifts show that you are an inhabitant and a gardener of the terrestrial Paradise." A garden indeed by merely the denomination of its flowers and plants directs its lover to holy names that are dear to the Catholic Church.

But here are new groups passing through the forest, coming from the open fields with the produce of their farms, and driving their flocks. These will tell us that under the influence of rural impressions they have especial signals of the same kind on their road without looking far for them. These men, of whom, as Pliny says, he is counted the worst who

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[*] Reg. M. ap. c. 1. Luc. Holstein. Cod. Regularum.

[†] Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. iii. c. 15.

[‡] Regula Solitariorum, c. xv. ap. id.

in fine weather works under a roof, and not in the open land, find in the exercise of agriculture repeated directions to a far higher object than their common employment indicates; and we may express wonder in the very words of the ancient naturalist, that "some, for the sake of certain interests, should pass by so many things without any observation, which are spontaneously offered, presenting a far greater utility to life than that of fruits *." For, in the first place, the innocence of that mode of life naturally of itself disposes men for the reception or retention of truth, and for remarking the great lessons in accordance with Catholicity which the spectacle of nature furnishes.

> "Ad strepitum labentis aquæ, quum sæpe solerem,
> Gramineis recubare toris ; anatumque cohortem,
> Pullorumque greges per florea prata viderem ;
> Novi quam faciles veniant in carmina musæ,
> Tranquillus quas urbe procul strepituque recessus
> Invitat ; pariterque placent et dulcia rura,
> Hospitis et facies jucundo blandior agro †."

Antiquity has but one voice to acknowledge the peculiar innocence of agriculture ‡, as in the familiar lines,

> "Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis,
> Ut prisca gens mortalium
> Paterna rura bobus exercet suis §."

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More significant are the words of Ulysses to the swineherd, after hearing his history and mode of life, contrasting it with his own wandering course,

> ——ζώεις δ' ἀγαθὸν βίον ||.

The old tragedian bears the same testimony, speaking of one who is hard-featured, but a brave man, rarely frequenting the city and forum, cultivating his farm with his own hands ; for he concludes thus, "such men save the country, being full of sense, straightforward in speech, pure in manners, and of lives without reproach."

> *Μορφῇ μὲν οὐκ εὐωπὸς, ἀνδρεῖος δ' ἀνὴρ,*
> *ὀλιγάκις ἄστυ κἀγορᾶς χραίνων κύκλον,*
> *αὐτουργὸς, οἵπερ καὶ μόνοι σώζουσι γῆν,*
> *ξυνετὸς δὲ χωρεῖν ὁμόσε τοῖς λόγοις θέλων,*
> *ἀκέραιος, ἀνεπίληπτον ἠσκηκὼς βίον* ¶.

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* N. H. lib. xviii. 1.

† Vanierus, Præd. Rustic. xii.

‡ Cicero de Off. i. 111. Cato de Re Rustica. Virg. Georg. ii.

§ Epod. 2. || xv. 490. ¶ Orestes, 918.

"I have known many," says Cicero, "and indeed, unless I err, you all agree with them, who regarded that rustic life which this man disdains, as the most virtuous and the most sweet of all lives *." Pliny the naturalist remarks, that the bravest and best men are born of agricultural parents,—"minimeque male cogitantes †."

The Catholic Church, as may be witnessed in the works of St. Chrysostom ‡ and of St. Augustin §, is not backward to recognize the justice of these attestations. "Artium omnium innocentissima agricultura," are the words of Pope St. Gregory the Great, which all Christian antiquity echoes. Observe how the clergy of the middle ages contrast themselves with rustics. In the vision of St. Dominic, which one of their great collections offers to the instruction of the people, the devil, to a question of the saint, replies, "that in hell are many prelates and ecclesiastics, princes and princesses, innumerable merchants and citizens; that in later times some monks and friars would be there, but that they had very few inhabitants of villages, and peasants; for though not perfect, they were not great sinners ‖." In fact, Angelo Pandolfini does but express the judgment of the Church in saying, that "of all human exercises, none should be preferred to agriculture, which, given by nature, is without violence and injustice; whereas in other pursuits it is difficult not to do some wrong to some one or other in order to derive advantage for ourselves. Agriculture, without taking any thing from any one, supplies men with what is necessary; and without it, other arts would be abolished, and human life reduced to a gross and uncultivated state ¶." Here then is already a signal set up by the way-side of those who are lovers of nature and of rural pleasure; for, in the modern world, the Catholic Church stands alone in her practical adherence to this original estimate of the surpassing dignity and innocence of the agricultural over every other mode of life. With the ancients, Ceres and Proserpine received a surname, as having first established laws; for agriculture was regarded as the source of law. With human passions there can indeed be no pursuit safe without its protection; but certainly the mediæval writers seemed to regard the cultivation of the ground as a guarantee for the absence of debate. "There was a lake in the country of Pontus," says one of them, "which yielded great returns in fish. Two brothers contended for the property, and

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* Pro Sex. Rosc. Amerino. † Nat. Hist. xviii. 6.

‡ Hom. xix. ad pop. Ant. § Lib viii. de Genes. ad let. c. 8.

‖ Ant. d' Averoult, Catéchisme Historial, i. 687.

¶ La vita civile.

human blood was shed for some fish. A holy priest beheld the strife and spake thus, 'O my sons, do not violate fraternal peace and destroy rational souls for the sake of some fish.' Then he besought God that the waters of strife might never more contain fish, nor even cover the land; and accordingly the lake dried up, and corn is grown on the spot to this day[*]." The farmer is represented by the Catholic poet as a general composer of all differences by peaceful agreement—

> "Ambiguas vitet lites, quæ civica bella
> Victori victoque parem dant sæpe ruinam.
> ———— ignaraque legum,
> Non recti justique, secet prudentia lites."

Agriculture points to the Church by its general lessons of piety, which can have no other centre but the Catholic religion. What can be more Catholic than the doctrines of patient expectation and of blind obedience which it teaches? "There was a certain young brother, named John, in Reati," says an old writer, "who being observed often to weep while in the garden of the convent, and asked the cause, replied, 'It is that I see the herbs, and trees, and plants, the birds, and the earth itself with its fruits, obey God implicitly; while men, to whom for obedience eternal life is promised, transgress their Creator's law.' This brother died young, and some days before, a nightingale used to perch before the window of his cell and sing most sweetly; and when the brethren wondered, he said with a smile, 'She is inviting me to paradise[†].'" Agriculture, too, points to the Catholic Church by reason of its associations, while introducing men to a sphere of ideas almost ecclesiastical. Virgil could only say—

> ———— "redit agricolis labor actus in orbem,
> Atque in se sua per vestigia volvitur annus[‡]."

But in Christian times, until this hour, where is the farmer that divides not the circle of his labours by counting from the days of St. Michael, St. Martin, and the festivals of our Lady? Thus the popular lines—

> "À la Saint-Antoine
> Les jours croissent le repas d'un moine;
> À la Saint-Barnabé
> La faux au pré.
> A la Sainte-Catherine
> Tout bois prend racine.

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[*] Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, 243.
[†] Ex vitis frat. Eremitar. d. Augustini, lib. ii. c. 5. ap. d. 307.
[‡] Georg. ii. 401.

Passé la Sainte-Clément
Ne sème plus froment[*]."

He sees the corn and grapes carved over the altars as symbols of faith: the flock and the shepherd, the wolf and the lamb, the dove, the palm, the olive, all have to him a new meaning. The ninth canon of the council of Narbonne, in 1045, forbids the cutting down of olives in time of war, for this reason, that the olives furnish matter for the holy chrism, and supply the lamps which burn in the churches. In like manner bees are regarded to this day, throughout Provence and Languedoc, with a kind of religious reverence by the rural population, as being employed to fabricate tapers for the altars of God. In England they were thought to love children; and in Normandy it was deemed a kind of sacrilege to kill them without necessity. Some even said, that to swear in their presence would expose you to their sting[†]. If you proceeded to the fold—

Ἔνθα οἱ ἦσαν ὕες μάλα μυρίαι, ᾗσι συβώτης
Ἐσθλὸς ἐὼν ἐνίαυεν[‡].

You ought to be reminded less of Eumæus than of the mediæval hero who so often tended those animals on the monastic farms a penitent nameless and unknown. No longer the shrill trumpet for his ears—

Κλαγγὴ δ' ἄσπετος ὦρτο συῶν αὐλιζομενάων[§].

Images of St. Anthony associated with the herd—

"Quum redeunt a glande sues pinguedine tardi."

Of St. John the Baptist with the lambs—of the infant Saviour with the ox and ass in the stable, were found by every one, at least during many ages, set up and firmly fixed in the popular mind for his instruction. Solicitude for the harvest is associated with the rogations, of which St. Gregory of Tours says, "quæ usque nunc in Christi nomine, per omnes ecclesias in compunctione cordis et contritione spiritus celebrantur[‖]," and which only of late in England are unobserved, where now supplications for rain or severe weather resemble those which Sidonius Apollinaris describes as having preceded the institution of the rogations—"quod salva fidei pace sit dictum," he says, were weighed down by the banquets of the suppliants, "vagæ, tepentes, atque sic dixerim oscitabundæ supplicationes, quæ sæpe interpellantium prandiorum obicibus hebetabantur[¶]." It is associated also

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[*] Le Roux de Lincy, Livre des Proverbes Français, 1.
[†] La Normandie Romanesque.
[‡] xv. 555.
[§] xiv. 412.
[‖] lib. ii. 34.
[¶] Epist. lib. v. 14.

with the most ancient liturgies, as with that of St. James, in which we find the prayer, " Memento, Domine, temperiei aeris, imbrium lenium mitis roris," and with the Gregorian sacramentary, where is the formula " Benedic, Domine, et hos fructus novos uvæ, quos tu, Domine, rore cœli, et abundantiâ pluviarum et temporum serenitate atque tranquillitate ad maturitatem perducere dignatus es*." It is associated also with popular observations transmitted from ancient times, recalling the names of St. Medard and St. Swithin, as also with pious confidence in the intercession of holy contemporaries; as when the prayers of St. Martin† and of St. Gertrude were found effectual in procuring the needful serenity‡; to which last instance the Spanish church alludes, in the ancient untouched hymn still used in Catalonia,—

> " Ne seges largo vitietur imbre,
> Sedulis cœlum precibus serenat;
> Et graves læsi gemebunda placat
> Numinis iras §."

It recalls, too, the solemn processions accompanying holy shrines, as that of St. Geneviève, which so often obtained from Heaven the weather necessary for the fruits of the many feeding earth, to one of which instances Erasmus himself bears a remarkable testimony‖. Mathieu Paris supplies a similar instance as occurring in the year 1257. " At the beginning of autumn," he says, " the abbot and monks of St. Alban's, considering that by the immoderate rains the crops were threatened with destruction, decided in chapter, that according to the usual custom in such times a fast should be ordained, and a solemn procession of both the monks and the people, to escort the shrine of St. Alban to the church of St. Mary of the Meadows, barefooted and praying fervently. That very day, after the ceremony, the inundation ceased." In the following year, a similar procession, with a solemn fast, produced the same results; the people of London following the example¶. The advance of each atmospheric change is associated with the festivals, as in the popular lines—

> " Si l'hyver va droit son chemin,
> Vous l'aurez à la Saint-Martin;
> S'il n'arreste tant ne quant,
> Vous l'aurez à la Saint-Clément.

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* La tradit. de l'Eglise sur les bénédictions, 203.
† De Gestis Abb. majoris monast.
‡ Insin. div. pietatis S. Gert. Abb. lib. i. c. 14.
§ Hymnodia Hispanic. 361.
‖ Hist. de ce qui est arrivé au tombeau de St. Gen. 96.
¶ Id. ad ann. 1258.

Et s'il trouve quelqu'encombrée
Vous l'aurez à la Saint-André*."

Indeed so intimately associated are the seasons with the mysteries of faith, and so great is the impression produced by the ecclesiastical solemnities in connexion with each, that nature seems to borrow her aspect principally from them. So in a Burgundian "Noel," the winter is said to surpass in beauty the other seasons of the year, on account of the festival of the Nativity of our Lord. But with the cultivation of the ground there are wound up associations of a still more special and significant character than any we have already remarked: for it is nearly impossible to pursue that mode of life long, without hearing somewhat of the examples of the saints who hold it in such predilection, and of the direction which they imparted to it by their holy rules.

That an agricultural life had dignity with the ancients, appears clearly enough, even from the supposition of the suitors, that Telemachus was only gone into the fields to look after the sheep or to the swineherd †. How charming is it to read of Philopemen labouring in the fields along with the peasants, loving to walk every evening after dinner to his farm, which was at a league from the city, where he used to sleep on a bed like that of a common labourer ‡! Atilius was surnamed Seranus, from his being in the act of sowing land when called to power. "Sed illæ rustico opere attritæ manus," says the historian, "salutem publicam stabilierunt." "The same hands that lately steered the yoke of oxen ploughing, now hold the reins of the triumphal chariot; nor did they disdain, after laying down the ivory rod, to take up again the plough handle. The memory of Atilius can console the poor, but much more may it teach the rich, that riches are not wanting to those who covet praise §." With Christians the examples of the patriarchs were sufficient to elevate such occupation in general estimation; but the names of the saints of the Church conveyed a still more familiar and domestic lesson, to teach its connexion with the spirit and manners of Catholicity.

In every pursuit men are naturally directed to learn somewhat of the most eminent persons who preceded them in the same occupation. The Catholic Church therefore stands full in view to those who follow any employment connected with the soil, or with a pastoral or rural life.

Ἄρχετε Βωκολικᾶς, μῶσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ' ἀοιδᾶς ‖.

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* Le Roux de Lincy, Proverbes Français.

† iv. 640.

‡ Plutarch.

§ Val. Max. lib. iv.

‖ Theoc. iii.

Shall we, then, hear nothing of St. Geneviève? Truly to use familiar words,—

"Such a rural queen,
All Arcadia hath not seen."

Nothing of St. Isidore, the husbandman and patron of Madrid, on whose festival Antonio de Escobar, the great Spanish preacher, so beautifully desçanted on the happiness of an agricultural life, and on its innocence, citing the line of Menander—

"Cum improbus sis, te rusticum simulas!"

and the words of Seneca—

"Non alia magis est libera et vitio carens,
Ritusque melius vita quæ priscos colat,
Quam quæ, relictis mœnibus, sylvas amat*."

The Church of Spain sings thus upon his festival—

"Pauper excultis Isidorus arvis,
Evolans alte super et potentes,
Et super reges fruitur beatæ
Munere lucis.
Inclyti reges meritos honores
Jugiter solvunt humili colono,
Ampla se cujus precibus tueri
Regia gaudet †."

The Franciscans, to show why our heavenly Father chose to manifest the birth of Christ to shepherds first, have collected reasons almost infinite, taken from observations respecting the innocence of that humble life, and the great examples with which it has been exalted ‡. The farm-house, all through the middle ages under the safeguard of the Church, which, as in the Council of London in 1142, ordained that the labourer in the field should be as sacred and inviolable as if in sanctuary §, beheld the birth of popes and bishops, and of holy monks innumerable. Maicus, bishop of Aquileia, afterwards a cardinal, had been a shepherd like his father; and, in order to preserve the memory of his origin, he caused to be painted as his insignia a lamb carrying a book on its head ||. St. Paulinus of Aquileia was born of rustic parents, who were cultivators

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* In Evang. Comment. Paneg. vol. vi. 250.

† Hymnodia Hispanica, 298.

‡ Bucchius, lib. aureus conformitatum vitæ B. Francisci ad vit. Jesu Christi, lib. i. p. 4.

§ Mat. Paris, 1142.

|| Ant. d'Averoult, Catéchisme Historial, c. vi. tit. 6.

of the ground, like so many who still supply the Church with choicest priests:

> "Sola relinquentes pueris hæredia, rastros,
> Jugera pauca, domum luteam, cultumque supremi
> Numinis, et sanctos mores, studiumque laboris *."

Even in their writings, the sons of such men leave traces of the habits of their youth. Father Melchior Rodriguez de Torres, whose tomb is at Burgos, a monk of the order of Mercy, and convent of Madrid, and Bishop of Rosse, in Ireland, where he founded a convent of his order, published, in 1603, a book entitled "Agriculture of the Soul." Like their parents, the saints often continued to exercise themselves in agriculture. Farmers must remember that their most eminent predecessors were monks, and that, even at the present day, monks are their fellow-bourers in England, Ireland, France, Africa, and America; proving, by the success of their agricultural works, the justice of the old remark expressed by Pliny—"Honestis manibus omnia lætius proveniunt, quoniam et curiosius fiunt †." Hear the ancient rules. "The monks who are deputed to tend the flocks and herds," says that of St. Ferreolus, "must attend to sing the psalms as the others ‡." "A monk," says the rule of St. Isidore, "should never disdain to be employed in any necessary labours for the service of the monastery. For the patriarchs tended flocks, and gentile philosophers were shoemakers and tailors, and Joseph, the just, to whom Mary was espoused, was a carpenter, and Peter, the prince of the apostles, was a fisherman; and all the apostles exercised corporal labour §." "Monks," says the rule of St. Fructuosus, "should not disdain to tend the flocks and to labour like the patriarchs and apostles; for, from the sheep that they tend, great benefits arise:—inde recreantur parvuli, inde foventur senes, inde redimuntur captivi, inde suscipiuntur hospites et peregrini. Therefore this labour should be endured with hilarity of heart ||." But take examples:—for that star of the shepherd, and that fire of the herdsman, can recall sublime figures.

> "Omnia, proh! quantum longis mutantur in annis!
> Et stolidus vir pascit oves: quæ cura manebat
> Ingenuo pueros olim de sanguine natos ¶."

St. Fiacre, St. Friardus, and Carloman resigned the government of men to lead flocks to pasture, as Benedictine Monks. St. Florentin, of the same order, not only tended sheep, but trained a wolf to

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* Præd. Rust. ix.
† N. H. xviii. 4.
‡ Regula S. Ferreoli, c. xi. ap. Luc. Holstein. Cod. Reg. 1.
§ Reg. S. Isidori, c. 6, ap. id.
|| Reg. S. Fructuosi, c. 9, ap. id.
¶ Van. Præd. R. ii.

guard them. St. Fechinus took charge of the meadows of his monastery, and destroyed the vermin that infested them. St. Juliana took care of cows and milk. St. Hilda protected the harvest. Some monks applied themselves to the cultivation of garden vegetables to serve as food for the brethren. St. Winoc and St. Ursus exercised the office of millers. Each monastery had its grange, which word, in some regions, as in Burgundy, still designates a farmhouse or yard. While on the way from the monastery to the grange, the monks were to keep silence, and not even to reply to any one who might question them, excepting to show the road to persons who had lost their way, or to point out in what spot strayed cattle might be found. From St. Martin's to the Purification, the monks laboured at threshing corn. "Every day, in all seasons after prime, the monks, who had care of the oxen, yoked them to the plough, and went two and two to the place appointed. In the season when the oxen were at pasture, one or two monks watched them during the night, which vigils did not dispense them from following the plough next day. The brethren who had charge of the sheep might speak in a low voice together, two by two, while in the fields. In the grange monks could eat cheese and drink milk; but they had neither fish nor eggs*."

But Catholicity not alone gives examples; it also supplies rules to farmers, the traces of which can still direct them to the Church, from which such varied benefits have ever flowed; for if the peace and innocence of rural life, if the agricolæ prisci, fortes, parvoque beati, be the objects of our predilection, as they must be on this road, shall we not turn with love to that religion which knew so well how to secure and perpetuate both, amidst all the fluctuations of human society, which swell with such fatal consequences against them, whenever that influence is withdrawn? With the gentiles the cultivation of the ground was not left profanely amerced of all intercourse with Heaven. Blind and perverse as they were, some traces of natural piety or traditional respect existed amongst them, in connexion with agriculture. The poet who describes

"Ritus ut à prisco traditus exstat avo,"

supplies instances, as in the admonition,—

"Luce sacrâ requiescat humus, requiescat arator,
  Et grave, suspenso vomere, cesset opus.
Solvite vincla jugis; nunc ad præsepia debent
  Plena coronato stare boves capite.
Omnia sint operata Deo:
Casta placent superis †."

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* Henriquez Menologium Hist. Cister. 219.

† Tibullus.

That agriculture was even a school of piety, might be inferred from the example of the Peleades, with the Dodonians, who, according to Pausanias, first sung the words,—"Jupiter has been is, and will be. O! great Jove, it is by thy succour that the earth yields its fruits *."

But not to multiply examples from Pagan times, we may observe that the Catholic Church from the beginning sought to impart to this mode of life a spiritual character, in accordance with the supernatural elevations of faith. In the first place, she weaned from a too ardent pursuit of profit by agriculture, the farmers and proprietors themselves. Thus Sidonius Apollinaris writes to Siagrius, blaming him for devoting himself too much to the care of his farms,—"Agrum si mediocriter colas, possides: si nimium, possideris. I do not say," he adds, "that a wise man is to neglect the care of his domestic affairs, but only that he should take heed not to exceed moderation in regard to it †." Again, writing to Eutropius, he says, "I must draw you forth from this depth of rustic repose; for if you cut up the fields with the quivering plough-handle, or if, bowing down, you ravage the flowery wealth of the meadow with the crooked scythe, or if, a stooping digger, you insert with a hoe the heavy branch in the vineyard, then you enjoy the supreme happiness of your vows ‡." In short, if Catholicity be heard, the master is to have very different views in the cultivation of his land, and the care of his flocks, from those of the suitors in the Odyssey, who visit the sheep-folds and the goats merely that

ὅς τις φαίνεται ἄριστος §

may be ordered for their table. To the labourers employed under him the Church no less extends her care, imparting to them a spiritual direction. These little by-paths through the forest of life not being generally marked in any maps, few men are aware of her solicitude in regard to rustic servants; yet even on the highways of history we find instances, as in the celebrated work of Reginus in the ninth century, where we read, "Priests are to admonish swine-herds, and cattle-herds, and other rustics who remain much in woods, that they must hear mass, at least on Sundays and festivals ||." So of the farmer, Vanierius says,

> "Festa piè celebret; quod lex vetat, omne dolosâ
> Cesset opus sine fraude domi rurique; laborum
> Ipse quoque immunis bos prata per herbida festus
> Ambulet, et posito vires confirmet aratro ¶."

After the first French revolution, old men say that it was sad

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* Pausan. lib. 10. † Sid. Apol. Epist. lib. viii. 8. ‡ Ep. lib. i. 6.
§ xiv. 160. || Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. ii. 367.
¶ Præd. Rust. ii.

to see the force that had to be employed to make animals of labour renounce their custom of a weekly rest. It is notorious, that the most eminent preachers used frequently to leave learned schools and proud capitals, where princes were their auditors, in order to instruct the poor labourers in the fields. The last days of the great St. Anthony of Padua supply an instance; for it was in the time of harvest, shortly before his death, that through an anxiety to preach to the labouring population, he removed from the city to St. Peter's field, from which he never returned alive. The owner of this solitary spot, a nobleman named Tiso, was greatly pleased at the coming of such a saint to his lands. There was a spot near the convent of the friars surrounded with woods, in which stood an immense tree, with branches diverging from the trunk; and the man of God remarking it, wished to have a cell constructed in it. Tiso hearing of his wish from the brethren, went immediately, and with his own hands made three cells there, for him and two companions. Thither he repaired to study the holy Scriptures; and this was his last habitation among mortals, having been only removed from it in a waggon into Padua, when it was desired that he should expire in the convent within the city *. The rustic labourers were taught to sanctify their occupations by remembering the patriarchal life—like the monks, in solitude to regard Isaac going out to meditate in the fields, Jacob making his flocks walk before him, and remaining solitary behind them to contemplate God and receive his benediction, obtaining more from Him in these moments of solitude than he had ever before obtained in the company of men †. Moreover, the material provision for the comfort of the rustic labourer points to the Catholic Church; for where its influence extends he lives in the farmer's house, and is treated well:

> "Agricolas juvat imprimis spatiosa culina;
> Post epulas hinc inde sedent et grandis Arator,
> Horridus et custos caprarum, oviumque magister,
> Atque lacertosus Fossor, durusque Bubulcus ‡:"
>
> "O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint,
> Agricolas!"

These well-known words point to Catholicism, whence flow more abundantly than the Mantuan could hope

> "Et secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
> Dives opum variarum §."

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* Vita B. Antonii de Pad.

† Dom de Rancé, de la sainteté et des devoirs de la vie monastique, i. 516.

‡ Præd. Rust. i.

§ ii. 458.

For truly the voice upon this road exclaims, not happy the rustic who knows Pan and Silvanus, and the Nymphs, who can only say of their companion,

> ——— "Ah quoties nymphæ nemorisque, lacusque
> Ne faceret monuere, et consolantia verba
> Dixerunt [*] !"—

but rather happy those who have heard the holy preacher, and whose pastoral labours are sanctified by the intentions of Catholic piety, which by sermons and manuals, written expressly for their instruction by monks and priests, are rendered familiar to their minds. Many such manuals exist, such as the work De regimine rusticorum, sive de agricolarum Christianorum officio, virtutibus, moribus, et laudibus, on which I shall have to dwell in another place. Many poems, also, attest how deeply holy men felt interested in the sanctification of rustic labourers. The book Hortorum, of the Père Rapin, and the Prædium Rusticum of the Père Vanier, have been compared for beauty to the Georgics. All is spring, pasture, and fruitful herds; but we have the cross, the chapel, and the beads. The Syracusan shepherd, with Theocritus, has but one wish,

> "Non mihi sint nec opes Pelopis, nec regna Seleuci
> Nec celeri cursu ventos superare fugaces;
> At vacuo curis liceat cantare sub antro
> Et procul e speculo mare prospectare profundum [†]."

That wish alone was sufficient, when employed by the Catholic Church, to direct the rustic right.

> "Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
> Sooth, their eyes have caught new pleasures,
> Whilst the landscape round them measures."

It is, indeed, a sweet picture that Theocritus sets before us:

> ——— *ἔχθιστον ἔχων ὑποκάρδιον ἕλκος,*
> *ἀλλὰ τὸ φάρμακον εὗρε· καθεζόμενος δ' ἐπὶ πέτρας*
> *ὑψηλᾶς, ἐς πόντον ὁρῶν, ἄειδε τοιαῦτα.*

But it was only in Christian times that the true medicine was found. "Arator stivam tenens alleluja cantet," says an ancient rule. "Sudans messor psalmis se avocet; et dum palmitem curvum tondet vinitor falce, aliquid Davidicum canat. Hæc sint vestra carmina; hæc, ut vulgo aiunt, amatoriæ cantiones; hæc pastorum sibilus; hæc instrumenta culturæ [‡]." St. Cæsa-

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[*] Ovid. Met. xv. 11.
[†] lib. vii. 10.
[‡] Reg. Tarnatensis, c. 8. ap. Luc. Holstein. Codex Reg.

rius observes, that rustic labourers can learn the chants of the Church as easily as profane songs. "Nemo dicat, Non possum aliquid de hoc quod in Ecclesia legitur retinere. Sine dubio enim, si velis, poteris. Incipe velle, et statim intelliges [*]." In fact, at this day the rustic songs of a Catholic population, by innumerable allusions, traditions, proverbs, and observations, can direct aliens to the fold of the Catholic Church, while those of the northern nations that are cut off from unity, proclaim the deplorable consequences of having renounced her doctrines, broken the mystic and truly-golden chain of her associations, and thrown off her restraints.

Comrade, we cannot here look back leisurely on all the steps that we have taken through the forest since first we entered on the present road, to count how many vistas it has yielded to direct towards truth. Here, nevertheless, let us rest; and lo, the spot invites us under an oak, whose antique root peeps out upon the brook that brawls along the wood.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROAD OF HUNTERS.

A GREEN alley branching off at this turn can attract many who have been hitherto following the road of rural pleasures and occupation; for it leads, we shall be told, to the valley of the Eagle's nest, to the cross of the grand Huntsman, and to the pass of St. Hubert, where we can mark the musical confusion of hounds and echoes in conjunction.

The spectacle of nature, in scenery of woods and plains, when viewed in connexion with the chace, which can awaken so many associations of an historical and even ascetic character, may be said to have certain signals pointing to the Catholic Church, which can hardly fail to produce an impression on the minds of persons possessing any knowledge of past times. The Lorraine of the Vosges, that elevated part of France wearing so grave an aspect, from which rivers descend on all sides to all seas, once covered with forests, so vast that the Carlovingians judged them most proper for their imperial chace, associated with that hunting of which they were the scene, recall names and events,

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[*] Hom. 20. Bibl. Pat. tom. 11.

virtues, crimes, and acts of heroic repentance, which proclaim the power and benefits of faith.

How many deeds for penance within the forests in old Merovingian and Carlovingian days, without recurring to our Plantagenets! How many innocent victims, like the betrothed of Pepin, led into their dark recesses, and there slain or abandoned! What nights past in them, as when Berthe in the forest of Mans took counsel of the hermit! What hunting of princes in the forests of Thuringia and of the Ardennes, associated with the sufferings of holy bishops, whose constancy Catholicism only can explain! All the stern and tragic figures that pass before us in the pages of St. Gregory of Tours, persecutors of the saints, terrible Merovingians raging against the churches, like the Norman kings of England later, who would point at the fat stag, as we read of John, saying, "See how fine an animal without having ever heard mass*;" all these seem to furnish a signal from the deep woods, and to reveal who are the blessed that from age to age inherit the privilege of the cross, or of suffering on account of innocence and justice. There we seem to have before our eyes Guntheramus the king, at one time receiving with insult the monks of St. Martin of Tours, and then setting off for the chace†; at another, feigning to proceed to hunt, when he goes to search for the body of the murdered Chlodoveus; at another, finding traces of a slain buffalo, and hearing from the keeper of the woods that Chundo his chamberlain had killed it, —sanctioning the duel which ended in the death of Chundo—flying to sanctuary, as well as of his nephew and of the keeper, and in the bitter penitence of the king‡. On the other hand the scenery of the same hunting recalls the attention of great and holy kings to the offices of religion; for with the same exactness the old historians relate in what forests Charlemagne, and Louis le Debonnaire, and Charles the Bald, hunted during the autumn, and at what castle or town they kept their Christmas.

> "En ce temps, que j'ai dit devant,
> Sur le Noël, morte saison,
> Lorsque les loups vivent de vent."

The chace, with its symbolism, has even a certain connexion with a mystic view of life, as can be witnessed in many old royal and seigneural books of hours, in which, as on the bindings by the monk of Oignies Hugo, executed in the thirteenth century, hares, deer, wild boars, and wolves, are represented flying before the hunters through the forest; and though unobserved by St. Nilus and St. Bernard, who censure such imagery on churches,

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* Matt. Paris, ad ann. 1213.

† Hist. viii. 6.

‡ Greg. Turon. hist. x. 10.

not without a deep intention; for this symbolism was twofold; in a bad sense the hunters are the devil and his angels, " who pursue," as St. Augustin says, " like detestable hunters, the human race;" in a good sense the hunters are Jesus Christ, his apostles and doctors, as in the manuscript of Herrade of the twelfth century, where it is said, " We offer to God the fruits of our hunting, when by example or preaching we convert animals, that is, perverse men. The Christian hunt is the conversion of sinners; hares signify the incontinent, roebucks the proud, wild boars the rich, stags the wise: now we strike these four kinds of animals with four arrows, when by the example of chastity, humility, voluntary poverty, and perfect charity, we convert these four kinds of sinners by killing the customs of their former life, pursuing them by our dogs, which are the voice of preachers, and catching them in the nets of faith, when we lead them to the practice of holy religion*." The scenes of the chace also present an avenue to the Church in recalling the remorse of great penitents, who must always point at it wherever they are found:—

" Sternitur incursu nemus, et propulsa fragorem
Silva dat. Exclamant juvenes †."

These shouts were not pleasing in the ears of the Church; she associated them with the injury and oppression of the rustic peasants, when in certain spots they were so defenceless against the " debellator ferarum," that the old Gentile poet might still have said—

" ——— Citius falsum producere testem
Contra Paganum possis, quam vera loquentem
Contra fortunam armati ‡."

The Foresters therefore can recal such men as holy Hugo the Burgundian, whose courage to denounce their oppression only faith could have inspired. For killing game in the king's forests in England, before the great charter secured what the Church had always laboured to enforce, men were put to death or blinded§; all dogs in the vicinity used to be maimed ||, so that no one could make use of them. What then is the end of these diversions immoderately pursued? A wounded conscience where the voice of the Catholic religion has been heard; and that might be sufficient to direct men to it. The old narratives of such hunting are terrible: a certain gentleman, rich and powerful, we read, " used to hunt daily, and force his subjects to give up their avocations in order to accompany him. One day, pursuing

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[*] Le Père Martin.

[†] Ovid, Met. viii. 10.

[‡] Juv. Sat. 16.

[§] Matt. Paris, 1215.

[||] 1225.

the prey, he wandered through the forest till he lost his attendants; and still pursuing the game, night overtook him there, an no one ever saw him more or heard what became of him; but was generally believed that the earth had swallowed him up, a Dathan and Abiram*." You may smile at "Herne, the hunter once a keeper in Windsor forest," who, as the old tale goes doth all the winter time, at still midnight, walk round about a oak and shake a chain in a most hideous and dreadful manner, blasting the tree; but how can you refuse to hear what the grave historian relates of Henry IV.? "The king," says Pierre Matthieu, "hunting in the great forest of Fontainbleau, heard a sound of other dogs and the horns of other hunters, as if half a league distant, and the next moment as if close to him; and, by his orders, the Comte de Soissons, riding forward to see who had the audacity to hunt thus, a great black figure came out of the thicket and cried, 'M'entendez-vous?' and vanished. The count rode back quicker than he went, and made his report. The shepherds of the neighbourhood said that it was a spirit called, 'Le grand veneur.' This was at a time when the king took no other exercise but hunting, and when no one at court spoke of any thing else but hunting, and amours, and feasts. "J'aime mieux demeurer en l'estonnement de ces visions," adds Pierre Matthieu, "que de me jetter dans le labyrinthe de ces vaines recherches†." Such are the warnings to men whose desires, even while they live, like fell and cruel hounds, ever pursue them. The Church evinced her sentiments respecting the chace clearly enough, by the prohibitions she addressed to those who would submit to discipline without rebelling against her authority. In the rule of the Templars, the knights were strictly forbidden to hunt in the woods with bow or sling; and they were not even to accompany any one to hunt, unless for the sake of defending him from a perfidious Gentile. They were not to cry aloud with dogs or to indulge in laughter, but to evince humility and simplicity‡. "A religious man cannot be permitted to hunt," says another ancient rule, "or engage in a dangerous and useless contest with beasts, since he ought to know that vices for beasts are to be slain. Therefore no local custom, no opportunity of woods, no facility of ascent to the tops of mountains, or of descent into the depth of valleys, or of access to the secret wilds of forests, should induce him to engage in such fruitless labour§." In the ninth century no ecclesiastic could keep dogs or hawks for hunting, under pain of

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* Ant. d'Averoult, Catéchisme Historial, i. 723.

† Hist. de Hen. IV.

‡ Aubertus Miræus, Chronic. Cisterciensis.

§ Regula S. Ferreoli, c. 34. ap. Luc. Holstein. Cod. Reg.

suspension*. In later times, indeed, the men who disdained what they thought barbarous ages, discarded such prohibitions—

> "The horn, the horn, the lusty horn,
> Was not a thing to laugh to scorn."

Then was heard a De Rancé, afterwards manifested to the world as an elect vessel, boasting that he could discourse in the morning like an angel, and in the evening hunt like a devil; but in earlier days the laity themselves were not wholly free from all the restraints imposed by the ecclesiastical discipline. Pope Nicholas I., in answer to the Bulgarians, replied that hunting was unlawful in Lent, adding, "Præsertim, cum neminem nisi reproborum venationes exercuisse sacra designet historia †." In France the authority of the king, for whom twelve white falcons would be deemed a sufficient ransom, was sometimes interposed to produce similar effects. The Sire de Montmorenci, receiving a visit from Louis XI., wished to entertain him with a hunt, and made a grand display of nets and other instruments; but, to his great astonishment, the king, his guest, who detested the abuses of the feudal chace, ordered the whole to be burnt. Certain details in the royal archives of France, relative to hunting, indicate the beneficial effects of the ecclesiastical remonstrances. Thus we read, "To the king paid by the Sire de Montaigu an ecu, to give to a poor man from whom the said seigneur took a dog last December. Item, an ecu to give to a poor woman in compensation for a sheep of hers that was strangled by the hounds of the said seigneur; one ecu to give to a woman in compensation for a goose, which Muguet, one of the king's dogs, killed near Blois. Again, to the king an ecu, paid by Alexander Barry, an archer of his guard, to give to a poor man near Mans, in compensation for the injury done to his corn by the king's archers passing across a field to regain the high road. Again, to the king an ecu, to give to a poor woman in compensation for a cat which the king's harriers killed near Montloys, going from Tours to Amboise ‡." Another avenue presented within these bounds along the hunter's path, is formed by the memory of the saints as hunters, which they recall; for many holy men, at one period of their lives, were amongst the foremost to drive the deer with hound and horn, passing the day "in sylvis, inter spelæa ferarum," and yet leaving names canonized, as those of St. Hubert and

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* Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. discip. i. 92.

† Ap. Thomassin, Traité des jeunes, ii. 25.

‡ Registres des Comptes, ap. Michelet, hist. de France, tom. vi. 80.

St. Eustache, to be on the tongue and insignia of hunters for eve There is, as Dante says,—

> "A noise, as when a man perceives
> The wild boar and the hunt approach his place
> Of stationed watch, who of the beasts and boughs
> Loud rustling round him hears."

And lo! the hunters—albeit truth is not the game that they d hunt—are themselves the prize; for ill strives the will, 'gai will more wise that strives. Now would you see the net th takes the men, and how the toils are loosed? Hear then a ta of the earlier life of the great saint, who imparts to Auxerre a imperishable fame. He was once a man

> "Silvarum latebris, captivarumque ferarum
> Exuviis gaudens *."

St. Germain, the duke, on his return to Auxerre, as governor o that city, gave himself up to hunting like another Nimrod. Th forests around were immense. Each morning he used to rid forth with his dogs and attendants—the belluarum agitatore and at sunset return with the wild boars and roebucks that h had killed. "Huntsmen! I charge thee tender well my hound sup them well: to-morrow I intend to hunt again."—Such we his vespers. In the centre of the town, on the principal squar stood a large pear-tree, to which he used to suspend, as a troph the heads of the different animals. In earlier times the Paga of Auxerre had been accustomed to fasten to the same tree emblems in honour of Apollo and the huntress Diana; and th bishop, St. Amateur, was not slow to perceive that a certa superstitious feeling was still attached to the tree in the minds o a portion of the population. In consequence, he secretly requested the governor to have the tree cut down, but in vain: th indefatigable hunter continued, as before, to adorn the tree wit trophies of the chace. At length, one day, during the governor absence, the bishop repaired to the spot, and had it cut down an burnt, with all its load of ignoble carcases. The fury of th governor on hearing of the event knew no bounds. All his reverence for the bishop was instantly changed into deadly hatre but he dissembled for a few days, and then suddenly leading ou a band of armed men, he attacked the house of the bishop, wh escaped by flight. Speedy remorse, however, for this actio followed, and effected his conversion. Faith took root in hi withered soul, like those plants which spring up in a dr season, and to which a storm imparts that vivacity of colour an

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* Met. i. 14.

that beauty which they never before possessed. Thus was the hunter of Auxerre prepared for becoming later the successor of its holy bishop, St. Amateur [*].

Ulfrik, of Haseberg, the holy hermit near Compton, eight miles from Bristol, who died in 1154, had been a hunter in his youth,—his conversion dating from the day when he gave alms to a mysterious poor man in the woods, as he was following the game [†]. The very idea of conversion from such habits points therefore at Catholicism, which alone could have produced it.

But the scenery of the chace offers another avenue to the Catholic Church, through repugnance for the cruelty of the amusement, and compassion for the creatures against which it is directed. Virgil calls hunters robbers, as being the assassins of the innocent animals that they destroy, saying of the lion,—

> ———— "fixumque latronis
> Impavidus frangit telum [‡]."

The only hunting that Plato would admit is that of four-footed animals, in which the hunter exposes his own person to danger; such he calls sacred, saying, *τούτους μηδεὶς ἱεροὺς ὄντως θηρευτὰς κωλυέτω* [§]. Pliny says, "Reddatur et corvis gratia," and cites the indignation of the Roman people at the killing of a raven, which they buried with a solemn rite at the second stone on the right hand of the Appian way [‖].

It is not, however, to the gentiles that we are directed to look for pity when the woods resound at the passage of the chace, and the branches yield before the flying animals with a mighty crash. Their gods were hunters, or teachers of the sport, as we read of him whom Menelaus slew.

> Ἐσθλὸν θηρητῆρα· δίδαξε γὰρ Ἄρτεμις αὐτὴ
> Βάλλειν ἄγρια πάντα, τά τε τρέφει οὔρεσιν ὕλη [¶].

Nor can pity for the creatures of God be found with men of the modern civilization, however unlike the fabled heroes; for their modes of hunting recal not the thoughts of Shakspeare's duke, whom it "irk'd that the poor dappled fools, being native burghers of the desert city, should in their own confines, with fork'd heads, have their round haunches gored;" but the scenes of butchery described by Pausanias, where he records the horrible burning alive of animals at Patra, in honour of Diana. In a vast enclosure before the temple were divers birds, wild boars, deer, roebucks, wolves, and bears. Then fire was set to the piles that surrounded it, and when the animals sought to fly they were driven back to

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[*] Lefeuve, Hist. de St. Germ. l'Auxerrois.

[†] Matt. Paris, 1154.

[‡] xii. 7.

[§] De Legibus, lib. vii.

[‖] Nat. Hist. lib. x. 60.

[¶] Il. v. 50.

perish in the flames. "What is very remarkable," adds Pausanias coolly, "no accident has ever occurred, and no one has ever been wounded on these occasions [*]." The dying deer extorts the lamentation of the Catholic poet, who sings the chace;—

> "En vitæ mortalis habent quem gaudia finem!
> Non tacita sine tristia, morsuque doloris
> Percipitur, multo quæsita labore voluptas;
> Sed neque venator lacrymis, nec voce movetur
> Supplice [†]."——

There will probably, indeed, be some men, under all circumstances, to feel disgust at such general massacres as Pausanias and the modern journalists describe; and there will be even, perhaps, others, like Orlando, as represented by the poet Pulci, who shows him running into the opposite extreme, grieving for his dead horse, and addressing him by name, in tears, and asking forgiveness, if ever he had done him wrong; but in the Catholic Church alone, men are sure to find an expression, almost a doctrine, and examples, in unbroken succession, to give vent, and force, and sanction, to their regard for animals, and to their repugnance for the cruelty, which slaughters them for amusement.

> "Dost thou love hawking? thou hast hawks will soar
> Above the morning lark; or wilt thou hunt?
> Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them,
> And fetch shrill echoes from the hollow earth."

Nevertheless, perhaps these woods have rivalry and music that can please thee more. At all events, there is a delicious accordance, which can never be lost on some observers, between the men whom Catholicity really inspires, and the sweetest aspirations of a gentle and compassionate nature.

> "I have heard friendly sounds from many a tongue,
> Which was not human.—The lone nightingale
> Has answer'd me with her most soothing song
> Out of her ivy bower, when I sat pale
> With grief, and sighed beneath."——

The hunter, as well as the poet, will sometimes give utterance to such fancies; then, brother, will you not mark the link of blood which associates you with the saints? "Our sisters, the birds, are welcoming us," said St. Francis, as he rested under an oak, on arriving at the mountain of Alvernia [‡]: "the chaffinch that rises and begins its litanies at half-past one in the morning, pre-

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[*] Lib. viii.

[†] Præd. Rust. xvi.

[‡] Speculum vitæ S. Francisci, cap. 88.

cisely like a Trappist ; the black-cap that awakes and sings an hour later ; the black-bird that begins its day at half-past four ; and the sparrow that comes after all the others, not rising till half-past five, were studied with more delight by the monks and hermits than by the keenest lover of country pleasures, who derives his knowledge of their habits from his experience connected with the chace. Yet he is susceptible of their impressions ; he loves to hide himself among the trees, to be consorted with the humorous night, and the sweet bird that sings to it, that plaintive, if he feels with Virgil, that cheerful, if with Wordsworth, that wondrous songster, to whichever impression he may yield, rivaling, and excelling, as Pliny says, even the human musician *. Than such a hunter, what student will more gladly hear the grave, austere Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, who, in his poem on the nightingale, surpasses perhaps all its other admirers ? Hear it, and let the forest judge.

> " Cum telluris vere novo producuntur germina,
> Nemorosa circumcirca frondescunt et brachia,
> Flagrat odor, quem suavis, florida per gramina,
> Hilarescit Philomela, dulcis sonus conscia ;
> Et extendens modulando gutturis spiramina,
> Reddit veris et æstivi temporis præconia:
> Instat nocti et diei voce sub dulcisona,
> Soporatis dans quietem cantus per discrimina ;
> Necnon pulchra viatori laboris solatia.
> Vocis ejus pulchritudo clarior quam cythara,
> Vincitur omnis cantitando volucrum catervula ;
> Implet silvas atque cuncta dulcis arbustula,
> Gloriosa valde facta veris præ lætitia,
> Volitando scandit alta arborum cacumina,
> Ac festiva satis gliscit sibilare carmina,
> Cedit anceps ad frondosa resonans umbracula,
> Cedit olor, et suavis ipsius melodia,
> Cedit tibi tympanistria et sonora tibia :
> Quamvis enim videaris corpore permodica,
> Tamen cuncti capiuntur tua melodia.
> Nemo dedit voci tuæ hæc dulcia carmina,
> Nisi solus Rex Cœlestis qui gubernat omnia."

Thus will be generated a train of thoughts which will end by leading men to the only source where they can be satisfied ; for Catholicism expressly inculcates the sympathy which they involve.

" Let a man fear, above all, me, his God," says the book of the Revelations of St. Bridget, " and so much the gentler will he become towards my creatures and animals, on whom, on account of me, their creator, he ought to have compassion ; for

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* Nat. Hist. x. 43.

to that end was rest ordained for them on the sabbath[*]." Don Antonio de Guevara remarks, that in the law, God gives command to hunters to prohibit cruelty to birds[†], and that he teaches compassion for animals in the command—non immolabitur ovis una die cum filio suo. In general the Catholic religion inculcates a deep and cordial love and admiration for all the works of God—a certain reverence even for the interior and unknown cause of their actions ; "for such creatures," as Savonarola observes, "not having free will, are moved by the will of God ; and therefore rarely, or never, is error found in them[‡]." Antonio de Escobar uses these grand words, which comprehend even the scientific view of things :—"Laudare creaturas, earumque fulgorem manifestare creatoris est." He uses them in allusion to the praise bestowed by God, in Genesis, "on all his works[§]."

Catholicity reminds men that they are also bound to creatures by gratitude. "Therefore," St. Francis said, "I wish to compose a song of praise for the creatures of God, which we daily use, and without which we cannot live[‖]." De la Cerda, in order to deter boys and rustic swains from cruelty to animals, cites the anecdote, related by St. Raderus, of St. Ephrem, who had recounted it in these words, which hunters would do well to mark :—"When I was a rude boy, going on a message from my parents, finding a cow in the wood through which I was passing, I pursued it, throwing stones at it, till it fell to the ground, being in calf, and died. Meeting the owner, soon after, searching for the animal through the woods, I took care that he should know nothing about it from me. About a month later, being sent to the same place, night overtook me in the wood : meeting herdsmen, they asked how I came to be in the woods at night-fall. I told them my message. 'Well,' said they, 'wait with us till sun-rise :' assenting to their kind offer, I remained. In the dead of the night some wild beasts came and scattered the flock through the forest. The shepherds, on waking, finding their folds empty, thought that I was in league with robbers, and, in spite of my vows and protestations, carried me, bound, to the Prætor. I had passed forty days in prison, when, in a dream, I saw a youth with a formidable countenance, who asked me for what cause I was in prison. I related to him what had happened, protesting my innocence. Then he, with a smile, replied, 'I knew you were innocent of this crime, but I am not ignorant of your actions a month before, when you caused, so cruelly, an unhappy animal to perish. Learn, then, that the judgments of Heaven are sure and just.' It was not till after another forty days in prison, and

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[*] Revelat. S. Birgittæ, lib. v. Int. 25.

[†] Deut. xxii. Exod. xxiii. Levit.

[‡] Expos. Orat. Dom.

[§] Ant. Escob. in Evang. Comment. Paneg. vol. vii. 387.

[‖] Spec. vitæ S. F. 96.

being thrice on the point of suffering the rack, that I was finally released by a new Prætor, who delivered me to my parents*." But let us observe the examples with which the Catholic Church supplies us of that loving intercourse with animals, against which, the chace, as a mere wanton recreation, directly militates; marking but a few, as they occur by chance, lest we should be otherwise belated in this wood. Some few men, living in rural retreat, may suspect, but men, in general, certainly know not what an immense action, analogous, at least, to virtue, and what a disposition to cultivate familiarity with men continually reign through the whole animal creation, if human obduracy and cruelty did not interpose. If the voice of those who truly represent the Catholic charity were heard, the woods and fields would behold the times imagined by the poet.

> "Tunc et aves tutæ movêre per aëra pennas;
> Et lepus impavidus mediis erravit in arvis:
> Cuncta sine insidiis, nullamque timentia fraudem,
> Plenaque pacis erant †."———

Let us sit down a moment with men Catholically moved in smallest things, and watch them. Suso felt compassion, not for rational creatures only, but for the affliction of all animals, birds, or beasts; and he used to pray to Almighty God to come to their assistance ‡. This is not surprising, since, in general, we know that holy persons would not even tread upon a worm. St. Hermeland used to sit sometimes under a certain tree near the oratory of the martyr St. Leger, and read attentively. Caterpillars one day falling on his book, a brother, who marked the disturbance, was going to trample on them, but the man of God forbade him §. Probably he only spared them as criminals fled to sanctuary; for otherwise an extravagance should not be cited. The chace of the middle ages often ended in the domestication of some poor animal, whose subsequent life, under the fostering care of its original protectors, recals the stag, so dear to Silvia, which Virgil does not scorn to sing:—

> "Ille manum patiens, mensæque assuetus herili,
> Errabat silvis; rursusque ad limina nota
> Ipse domum serâ quamvis se nocte ferebat ||."

"One day as the Count Egard was hunting a deer through the woods, after the manner of nobles, it happened that his wife, the Lady Catharine, daughter of St. Bridget, passed that way in a

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* De excellentia Cœlest. Spirit. c. 41.

† Ov. Met. xv. 2.

‡ In vita ejus.

§ Atonio de Yepes Montserratensis, Chronic. gen. ord. S. Ben. vol. ii. 441.

|| vii. 490.

chariot, when lo! the deer, wearied by the chace, fled to h from the ferocious dogs; and, as if in an asylum, laid its head o her bosom. Her husband, with his attendants, coming up, s showed them the poor animal, sheltering under her cloak and on her imploring its liberty, which was readily granted, th deer was suffered to regain the woods *." St. Martin protecte a hare from the hounds. St. Fructuosus used to take the mountain goats under his protection, and save them from the hunters. We find allusion to such acts in the charters of Merovingia kings. In a fragment from the archives of St. Denis, Dagobert conferring the right of asylum on that abbey, to extend as far a the foot of Montmatre, to all fugitives coming from Paris, use these words: "For if Almighty God, by the intercession o the saints, has liberated a brute animal, namely, a stag, in that very holy place, much more is it becoming in us that rational creatures, men, whatever crimes they may have committed against us, or against succeeding kings of the French, or against any other of the faithful of the holy Church of God, should be delivered and saved ‡."

It is not improbable that many of the popular sympathies connected with certain birds, originated in the tenderness which holy men exercised towards them. At all events, following the book of God, the Church having remarked, with St. Gregory Nazianzen, that our Lord refers us to the birds and lilies for examples of contentedness and facility in regard to food, and of beauty, to show that beauty is a consequence of abstinence, produces repeatedly the habits of irrational creatures, as capable of instructing men; and many narratives were composed to show how justly she did so, one of which Mathieu Paris relates as having been often told even by King Richard I., when he wished to shame ingratitude §. This was, in fact, a favourite theme with the mediæval writers, who, like the Catholic poet that describes the sweets of a country life, follow birds, as in the instance of the dove, through all the detail of their innocent manners, presenting an image of what would have reigned in Paradise if man had never fallen ‖. Mention, too, is made of the attention which was sometimes paid to the lessons of the winged Professors. Thus, we read that when Gregory IX., before being Pope, was legate in Lombardy, endeavouring to make peace between two contending factions, the captain of the dis-

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[*] Vita B. Catharinæ in lib. de peregrinatione S. Birgittæ.

[†] Antonio de Yepes Montserratensis, Chronic. gen. ord. S. Benedicti, vol. ii. 207.

[‡] Antonio de Yepes Montserrat. Chron. gen. ord. S. Ben. vol. ii. 492.

[§] Ad ann. 1196.

[‖] Præd. Rust. xiii.

session, who alone prevented peace, and who despised all censures of the Church, being excommunicated, and remarking that many storks who used to build on the towers of his house forsook them and went to another house, humbled his heart, and went to beseech absolution *. The hunter's road presents, however, a still more pleasing issue through these dark woods, to enable those who follow it to discern in the distance a better goal than their professed employment supposes ; for it familiarizes men with habits, and induces circumstances and observations which Faith can divert to her own immortal purposes. Hear what is related by John, a monk of the monastery of Tours. Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, hunting in the woods one day, pursued an animal till he lost his companions, and found himself alone. After long wandering, he met at sunset a rustic employed in making charcoal, whom not despising as rich the poor, sed ut homo hominem recognoscens, he deplored in the wretchedness of one the common misery of all men, and remembered that sentence, in sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo. Saluting him benignly, he inquired the way ; and the other, after first excusing himself from accompanying him by alleging his poverty, consented in the end ; and being invited to mount behind the Count on the same horse, began to engage in familiar conversation with him ; and in answer to the Count's inquiry as to what the people generally said of his government, proceeded to unfold all the popular grievances arising from the corruption and exactions and tyranny of the Count's ministers. This conversation lasted till they came clear of the forest, and arrived at the first gates of the town, where every one was wondering at the Count's protracted absence, and crowds of men, women, and children were waiting with torches on the road to see if he would arrive from the forest ; and it was then that the rustic first discovered the rank of his companion. His adventure was not terminated there ; for by the Count's order he was seated at the banquet table, and lodged in the palace. The next day the Count assembled his ministers, and obliged them to make over to his poor guide the sum of five hundred solidi, exempting him and his heirs for ever from all tribute and servitude. He then required them to make restitution to the multitude of all their ill-gotten treasures, and took measures to prevent in future a return of the same abuses †. Thus did a day's hunting end, where a year's study in a cabinet might not have led him, in the reform of those abuses which so directly militate against the influences of the Catholic religion ; thus were the dangers and hardships of the chace employed to make a prince feel himself a

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* Gotschalcus Holen, ord. Eremitarum D. August. 282.

† Joan. Monach. major, Mon. Gauffredi Hist. lib. i.

man, and to speak like man to man to a poor rustic ;—and saving all due respect to philosophy, it may be doubted whether the perusal of its interminable lucubrations would always produce an effect so favourable to the reception or to the retention of divine wisdom. In general the hunter's road is kept clear of many obstructions which oppose the advance of men towards a Catholic tone of mind ; for, as the Catholic poet says,

——— " Juvenes exercita cursu
Corpora venando durant ad frigus et æstum,
Corda sibi generosa parant, animamque capacem
Mortis, et expertem media inter tela pavoris."

There are at all events, as he remarks, worse roads for youth, which lead farther from the centre ; for witness those whom

——— " non flumina nando
Trajicere, et duris juvenilia membra palestris
Exercere juvat, pictis sed ludere chartis,
Concertare scyphis, mimoque obscena jocanti
Plaudere, vel satyri risus captare dicacis *."

The road of hunters familiarizes men less with such things than with the sites that recal the monastery or the hermit, like that described in the lines,

" Stabat acuta silex, præcisis undique saxis,
Speluncæ dorso insurgens, altissima visu,
Dirarum nidis domus opportuna volucrum †."

James d'Aimery, of an illustrious house of Languedoc, was surprised one day, while he was hunting, by a furious storm of thunder and lightning, which terminated in heavy rain. He fled for shelter to a cavern at the side of a hill, and on entering it with a certain fear, lest some ferocious animal should rush on him, he found at the end of it an old hermit praying to God. After finishing his prayer the hermit rose and embraced him. and in answer to his inquiries told him that he had visited in his youth the Holy Land, and that, to avoid the vices of the world, he had renounced it, and led an eremitical life ever since. The rain ceased, but the young hunter continued to converse with him. The hermit said that God had revealed to him at his prayers that a stranger was about to arrive. His words were so impressive, that Aimery was determined, before he left the cave, to forsake the world like him ; and this was the beginning of his religious life, which ended in his filling the office of seventeenth general of the order of Mercy ‡. To such scenes and men does

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* Præd. Rust. xi. † Æn. viii. 233.

‡ Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 360.

the hunter's road lead sometimes: and besides, what are often its concomitants?

> " Dicere nil quod pœniteat dixisse, maligno
> Non carpi sermone, metu pallescere nullo,
> Spes nullas agitare, graves nec volvere curas,
> Nec steriles hominum laudes nec vana morari
> Præmia, secretos ruri sed degere cœlo
> Teste dies, atque ipsa inter spelæa ferarum,
> Et sapere, et pravos urbis dediscere mores *."

Another opening on this road consists in the practical knowledge of nature, and that experience which the young hunter claims to himself, when he offers his services, saying,

> ——— " Nec nos via fallit euntes :
> Vidimus obscuris primam sub vallibus urbem
> Venatu assiduo, et totum cognovimus amnem †."

He knows the way, both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path; and Plato deems this exact personal acquaintance with the country, as arising from hunting, so favourable to habits of aptitude and sharpness in regard to the geography of mind, that it is mainly, perhaps, in consideration of this connexion he pronounces the chace to be useful to young men. Another opening on this road is effected by the repeated observing what are the habits of animals; for there is nothing so little in the world in which God does not appear great; and therefore Shakspeare represents King Henry the Sixth converting to a moral the flight of falcons in his hunting at St. Alban's, and exclaiming, " To see how God in all his creatures works!"

Another brake consists in the experience that the hunter's life yields of all the sweet impressions arising from the variety of hours which are so intimately associated with the observances of the Catholic Church, enabling even kings to enjoy, emerging from a humble roof, the breath of morning, and the early song of birds, like him described by Virgil:

> " Evandrum ex humili tecto lux suscitat alma,
> Et matutini volucrum sub culmina cantus ‡."

Towards sunset it is the hunter who, more than many other men, realizes the English poet's wish,

> " Be mine at vesper hour to stray
> Full oft that way,
> And when the dreary sounds decay,
> As with the sun the gale dies down,

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* Præd. Rust. xi. † Æn. ix. 243. ‡ viii. 455.

Then far away from tower or town,
A true peal let me hear,
In manifold melodious cheer,
Through all the lonely grove,
Wafting a fair good night from his high love
Who strews our world with signs from his own world above*."

Byron had felt this impression, riding in Ravenna's wood :

> "The shrill cicadas, people of the pine,
> Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
> Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
> And vesper bells that rose the boughs along :
> The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
> His hell-dogs, and their chace, and the fair throng
> Which learn'd from this example not to fly
> From a true lover—shadow'd my mind's eye."

Then later still,

"When light thickens ; and the crow makes wing to the rooky wood,"

the hunter, constrained to halt in solitude, lodges, like many poor pilgrims formerly, as our fathers used to say, at the sign of the moon, or at that of the oak and star,

Ἦμος δ' ἠέλιος κατέδυ καὶ ἐπὶ κνέφας ἦλθεν—

He keeps watch by night like a man devoted to austerity ; and all these results, from time devoted to the chace, have, it must be confessed, a certain influence, of which good ministering angels can often take advantage ; for the Church, too, desires men, instead of doing honours to the sun by giving him precedence, to be the first to rise, and to have heard the herald lark, when he

> "Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
> The morn's approach, and greet her with his song."

There are persons who seem to fancy themselves too fair to encounter Aurora, lest they should be carried off like Tithon, son of Leomedon and Orion—and not for them will the morning have its signs—but the Catholic Church is seen and heard by hunters early risen. For, gentle reader, can you say of yourself,

> "Sole ferè radiis feriente cacumina primis,
> Venatum in silvas juveniliter ire solebam †?"

Then, when the bar of gold is formed in the east, you will have often met persons hastening to mass, who have been long mark-

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* Lyra Inn.

† Ovid, Met. vii. 10.

[illegible], like yourself perhaps, "every speck of azure sky seen between the woven boughs; some solitary star between the foliaged lattice twinkling fair; or painted bird, sleeping beneath the moon; or gorgeous insect, floating motionless upon the pool, unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings have spread their glories to the gaze of noon." O that bright solitary star! how it can guide to faith, like that which once led wise men in the East! You will have heard too of those ancient kings and princes who repaired not to your own haunts before they had visited the Church.

Not unconnected with the desire of royal hunters were these privileges,—quod possit aliquando celebrare ante quam dies elucescat, as that granted to the Abbot of Grandmont *; and those conferred by Pope Clement V. upon the king of France; quod possit audire divina ante diem—quod Dominus Rex possit ante diem facere celebrari; and even on the queen, that she too might have mass celebrated before day †. The Church preferred such petitions to those of men in our times, little familiar with the hills and woods, who ask for the postponement of the morning sacrifice till the noon is past. She wishes men to have inhaled the wholesome breath of morn, wafted over medicinal odours of the field and violet banks, to have cleared their hearts with that blissful sight of the aurora—when poets cry,

> "The roseate sun-light quivers; hear I not
> The Æolian music of her sea-green plumes,
> Winnowing the crimson dawn?"—

Many arch expressive signs of nature fade before day's garish eye—

> Ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος ἠώς,

What mind is not clearer to read aright the pure and holy symbols she employs? Hear how a saint and poet speaks, "To rise early is so salutary a thing, that the mere motive of health should suffice to make you resolve to practise it. In this, as in all the rest, God has evinced the gentleness and suavity of his wise government, requiring us to do things which agree best with our nature, and desiring us to find it our interest even in this life to serve him. Our bodies participate in the nature of other bodies, and are preserved by the same means that are employed in their conservation. Now, who has not remarked that the aurora awakens the whole universe, and that the fresh light appearing on the horizon opens the eyes of all animals? If it was not wholesome to rise then, nature, which the hand of God makes act always in the interest of his creatures, would not

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* Levesque, Annales ordinis Grandimontis, cent. iv.

† Le Baron de Prelle, consid. sur les avantages de la Vieillesse, &c.

remove so quickly the veil of darkness which favours sleep, illuminate the east with those brilliant rays that awaken There are men whom the world calls great, who live but pleasure, and remain in bed to mid-day. They boast of th softness, and that they do not observe in that or in any thin else the order which God has established. This disorder their life arises from a still worse disorder in their soul. Is it n strange that these men, slaves of pleasure, should consent for a unwholesome sleep to deprive themselves of one of the mo delicious intervals of existence, which is the morning? Th the light returning seems to be given as for the first time, she ding on the heart of man a fresh joy. The aspect of the sk the coloured clouds, the opening aurora, the sun appearing i its magnificence—all this forms a glorious spectacle. The bir resume their song. From the flowers and herbs of the meado the sweetest perfumes rise—the earth, the air, the animals, a the elements clothe themselves with fresh beauty to welcom the return of light. As in a city which is to receive within it walls a mighty king, the citizens are seen employed in adornin the places through which he is to pass. At the receptio curiosity draws always crowds of the simpler sort, and why shoul wise men deprive themselves of the pleasure of assisting at thi festival which nature gives to us every morning? All th senses are then gratified; the eye feels pleasure in seeing da arise, in following the light clouds, in contemplating the thousand hues; the birds form a delightful harmony to the ear; the morning air refreshes our senses which the night had weighe down—it gives us health, it dispels sadness from the heart, an raises it without an effort towards divine thoughts [*]."

The Catholic Church also wishes men to converse too wit setting suns; for then she adds her comment on the text o nature, saying with John Major, "The sun went down, and tw men who had quarrelled had not forgiven each other from th heart [†];" adding, "Look upon that glorious symbol, and mour for those to whom the sun sets thus." Oh, imitate rather he whom Vesper, as the poet says,

> ———"Lighted all the way where she would wend,
> Which joy to weary wandering travellers does lend;"

so that in a mystic sense we can apply Virgilian lines and say—

> "Sol quoque et exoriens, et cum se condit in undas,
> Signa dabit: solem certissima signa sequuntur [‡]."

Besides, and after this observation, we must leave the present

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[*] Louis de Leon, The Perfect Wife.

[†] Magnum Speculum, 239.

[‡] Georg. i. 437.

road for the next that here presents itself. The morning, as well as every other period of the day, has its religious and historical associations, which points to the holy choirs of the Catholic Church, and to the divine songs of hooded men who do their office there. The book of contrasts can awaken many. The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey, the fields are fragrant and the woods are green. Well, but hear Rupertus, "We offer the hour of prime as the first-fruits of the day to our Redeemer. In the morning, Peter, who thrice denied our Lord, was moved by his look to tears of penitence. In the morning he appeared to the holy women after his resurrection. The vesper hour too has its peculiar dignity; for it was in the evening when our Lord took bread and wine, wrote his testament to his heirs, that is, humility and charity; and after a long and solemn discourse, being about to die, took leave of his sons and friends. In the evening also he was buried; in the evening he appeared alive in the habit of a stranger, and was known at the breaking of bread, kindling with charity the hospitable hearts of his disciples. The complin hour recals the agony of our Lord which took place at that hour, as also after his resurrection, his appearance in the midst of his disciples, saying, 'Pax vobis.' Midnight vigils recal the birth of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and his future advent to judgment*."

This is not hunters' language. Perhaps not now; but I repeat it, contrasts can often pierce deeply. Roused suddenly from such thoughts, the noise of hound and horn, according as they have influence upon the mind, can be listened to "as a knell that summons men to heaven or to hell." This dedication of hours by the Catholic Church was known moreover to hunters in times past; and therefore we read of many that while appearing bent upon the chace, they rode thoughtfully, they prayed secretly, they alighted at holy chapels, they aided poor men with their alms. Such was the Catholic hunting, and obviously in consequence of it, a view of the church was not intercepted. Recreation is necessary; no one denies it. Hunting is lawful; let it be granted. But day after day, according to the modern habits which are the growth of minds presenting a total blank as to any Catholic culture, to hear only of the cover, or the covey, of the keeper, or of the kennel, of the numbers just now killed, and of the beat intended for the morrow, of the manors, in a word, where every thing is preserved but faith, may really bring men suddenly within view of Catholicity, by causing them to have some wholesome and compunctious visitings, or at least by inducing quiet lookers-on to calculate the difference between the modern amusements of the field, and the hunting of that

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* Rupert. de divinis officiis, lib. i. 2—6.

day, when the sphere of ideas surrounding men was Catho and encompassed with a certain spiritual atmosphere from t influence of which they could escape wholly neither by busine nor by sport.

But, lo! the branching off of other roads. Such then, to ca a brief glance backwards at the two last, are the vistas throu the scenery of the visible world, and the rural impressions r sulting from them that reveal the Church; such the avenu ending at it, to which the employments and amusements of country life lead; to all of which, the words of the holy cho sung at matins are most applicable, "Posuit in eis verba signorum suorum."

We may now turn our steps along another inviting pat which will be found to yield glorious views of Catholicity through the poetical impressions to which the journey of man men through the forest of life becomes subservient.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROAD OF POETS.

BAYS and laurels, of which the leaves, as Plin thought, could prevent the contagion of pestilence, wildly and richly spreading under th trees that envy their perennial beauty, prepared as if to deck the poet's temples, now receive us into their deep shade. The pat cannot be mistaken or disdained; for, that ou traveller is a poet, or that travelling through this desert o mortals is calculated to unfold a poetic germ in the minds o most men, has already incidentally appeared. Let us mark the the vista which poesy opens through the world's wilderness t the bright mystic palace where is enthroned truth, from which all attractions emanate.

Homer speaks of an altar of the nymphs where all traveller offer sacrifice *; but those who follow with most love and purity the muses will be the first to admit, that though all should seek to have them for companions and ministers of guides, they are not guides themselves, capable of leading right, without other assistance, through the moral forest those who trust to their echoes

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* Od. xvii. 210.

for how many do we find upon this way, looking to them alone for direction, and like men lost in a thorny wood, that rend the thorns, and are rent with the thorns; seeking a way, and straying from the way; who, not knowing how to find the open air, but toiling desperately to find it out, torment themselves and perish! The wise and simple can detect the vanity of their pretensions. There is a man, they will only say, who haunts the forest, and abuses our young plants with carving on their barks, who hangs odes upon hawthorns and elegies on brambles, all, forsooth, deifying a name. The failures and abuse of poesy can however be instrumental to the right direction of the wayfarer on this path, as showing, that whatever militates against faith, since there can be no return to "the sacred nine," must form obstructions upon the road of men whom nature favoured with capacity for song. How many cry, "Would I were in the groves of the sacred valley where the muses dwell!" but it is not by invoking Bacchus that they can hope in this age of the world to arrive there*. Now has descended a brighter and serener hour. How much have later times added to the proofs which confirmed once a poet in this opinion, "that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem, that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourable things, not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that is praiseworthy!" In the temple of Apollo at Delphi, Pausanias says, "You saw the chair of Pindar; it was all of iron. On that chair sat the Pythagorean bard, when singing his lofty hymns in honour of the god†." But now, in praise of every enervating influence, the degraded poet sits upon the lap of pleasure, to flatter men who think not merely, like Themistocles, that he has the sweetest voice who best sings their own deeds; but that he is the master who fills the ears of men with the sophisms of the passions, to proclaim the wisdom of their choice. There is a kind of honey in Pontus, according to Pliny, which, from the madness that it causes, was called of old Mænomenon; and in Mauritania poisonous honeycombs are found. "What did nature mean," he asks, "by placing such snares in even honey and the honeycomb? Quid sibi voluit, nisi ut cautiorem faceret hominem‡?" No where is this caution more required than on the road of poets; for many, now more blind than Pagans, who had the sense to repeat with Plutarch, that the best fruit which men can draw from commerce with the muses, is to conquer and sweeten their nature, to render it docile, to escape all excesses,

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* Bacch. 410.

† lib. x.

‡ xxi. 45.

and to preserve moderation*, seek by song to render nature more perverse, more obstinate, to laugh down sanctity, and to unbridle youth. The superior Africanus placed an image of the poet Ennius on the sepulchre of the Cornelian family, as having illustrated it by his genius; but our poets, without faith, might stand sculptured over tombs, to indicate that they had contributed by their poisoned influence to bring both men and families to their ruin. Their fault, indeed, is not like that of Icarus, rejoicing in a lofty flight, and moved by a desire of heaven, deserting their leader to take a higher course, for which, in consequence, the poet supposes him to have been changed into the partridge, that cannot raise itself high, nor place its nest in lofty branches, but only skims near the ground, as if mindful of its former daring and of its results†. They merit no such metamorphosis, all that they desire is to lull men to some fatal halt; as if insensibility were the greatest friend of the only muses known to them, like those to whom the Trœzenians used to sacrifice on an ancient altar, offering at the same time their adoration to sleep, as being of all the gods most faithful to the muse‡. But are there no useful signals set on high when we reach the passes, by following which others that preceded us were lost? Indeed, if you will listen to them—

"Now, when 'tis the time's plague for madmen to lead the blind,"

the self-sufficient poets confess, unconsciously, their inability to guide you right; one says—

"We know not where we go, or what sweet dream
May pilot us through caverns strange and fair,
Of far and pathless passion." ———

Another utters this complaint—

"We poets in our youth begin in gladness,
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness."

What is this but directing us from the enchanted and visionary to the true and eternal castle of the soul? teaching us to cry, "Perfice gressus meos in semitis tuis," lest, receiving the seed by the wayside, we should lose it by means of the birds of the air§. Matthieu Schinner, the celebrated bishop of Sion, used to say, accounting for the taste which directed him in his choice of books, that a time would come for him when he would have more need of philosophy than of poetry: and Gabriel Chiabrera, on dying, ordered to be inscribed on his tomb these words,

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* Life of Coriol.

† Met. viii. 5.

‡ Pausanias, lib. ii.

§ Rupert. de div. off. iv. 7.

"Ego, cum viverem, O amice, requiem quæsivi in monte Parnasso: tu melius consultus eam quære in Monte Calvario *." Many poets discern this in time, and leave the tops of Parnassus, not like one in our age for the banquets of a godless throng, cheering on their flatterer, but for the secret depths of the devout cloister. Many troubadours finished their lives in monasteries †. Are we then to pass to the side of those who altogether reject poesy as a guide, thinking incurable its old disorder? For it is well to know, as Plato says, that it is not to-day for the first time that poetry has quarrelled with philosophy, as can be witnessed in the sayings, "This man who shines in a circle of fools—the troop that seeks to rise above Jove—this snarling dog that barks at its mistress, which are proofs of their old quarrel ‡?" Far from us such an error! It is remarkable that Socrates, when about to speak against Homer, betrays a feeling of remorse, saying, "Nevertheless I feel that my tongue is stopped by a certain tenderness and respect which I have entertained for him from my childhood §;" and, in truth, for banishing the poets he defends himself but lamely, since, if there had been any solidity in his argument, where he says, that "if the contemporaries of Homer and Hesiod could have drawn any salutary lessons of virtue from their poems, they would never have left them to wander alone from city to city," we should have to conclude that his own services, which were repaid by the hemlock, must have been equally if not more worthless. But it is only just to add, that he seems conscious of his utter failure in attempting to maintain his charge against poesy. More generous then is our great Dante, when he cries with reference to genius and its powers—

——— "to have lived
Coeval with the Mantuan, I would bide
The revolution of another sun
Beyond my stated years in banishment ||."

Yes, truly, he need not blush who can say with the sweet Sicilian—

Τέττιξ μὲν τέττιγι φίλος, μύρμακι δὲ μύρμαξ,
Ἴρηκες δ' ἴρηξιν· ἐμὶν δ' ἁ μῶσα καὶ ᾠδά·
Τᾶς μοι πᾶς εἴη πλείος δόμος. οὔτε γὰρ ὕπνος,
Οὔτ' ἔαρ ἐξαπίνας γλυκερώτερον, οὔτε μελίσσαις
Ἄνθεα, ὅσσον ἐμὶν μῶσαι φίλαι. ———

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* James de Richebourcq ultima verba.

† Cibrario, état politique du moyen âge, 180.

‡ Plato, de repub. lib. x. § Id. x.

|| Purg. 21.

There are other ways to truth through this world's forest, and perhaps some of them more direct, broad, and level; we all know it. They have no wild flowers though—

> "Sed me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
> Raptat amor [*]."

O pleasant light, my confidence and hope; for thou art but a minister employed by grace celestial; conduct us then on this new way where now I venture, leading to the bourne we seek[†]!

"Poetry, like truth, is a common flower," says an English author; "God has sown it over the earth, like the daisies. sprinkled with tears, or glowing in the sun." Ere we make many steps along this path, which it enamels and perfumes, the old lines will seem to acquire a new meaning;—

> "Forsitan hoc studium possit furor esse videri,
> Sed quiddam furor hic utilitatis habet [‡]."

We shall understand the wisdom of the pope, St. Pius the Fifth. thanking, by a solemn brief, the poet Ronsard "for having led the muses to the succour of religion;" and comprehend why Dante did not fear to invoke Virgil in the lines—

> "O courteous shade of Mantua, thou, whose fame
> Yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts!
> A friend, not of my fortune but myself,
> On the wide desert in his road has met
> Hindrance so great that he through fear has turn'd,
> Now much I dread lest he past help have stray'd.
> ———————— speed now,
> And by thy eloquent persuasive tongue,
> And by all means for his deliverance meet,
> Assist him [§]." ————————

Poetry assists men and clears the issue to Catholicity, first by elevating minds above the sordid considerations which would conceal from them the beauty of faith,—

> —— "ubi mota calent viridi mea pectora thyrso,
> Altior humano spiritus ille malo est [‖]."

Socrates himself subscribes to the general estimate of the divine origin of poetic influence, so far as thinking that it would be sinful to neglect its cultivation. "Reflecting," saith he, "that perhaps I might have a vocation from Heaven for poetry, I deemed myself bound to obey; and, in fact, it was safer not to depart from life before discharging my conscience by making

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[*] Georg. iii. 291.
[†] Dante, ii. 13.
[‡] Trist. iv.
[§] Hell, 2.
[‖] Ovid, Trist. iv.

verses[*]." Poesy can assist in guiding to the true goal of the elect in the beginning, by separating its lovers from the profane host of those who turn their faces from that glory. It is a sweet and profound title which remains to part of one old abbey—Poets' Corner; as if poets in life and death were of the few, apart from the common crowd of men, who, while rejecting faith, will disdain the muse, exclaiming, Homer suffices. He is the best poet who asks nothing from me, no sacrifice of egotism, luxury, or pride—

——————— *ἅλις πάντεσσιν* Ὅμηρος·
Οὗτος *ἀοιδῶν λῷστος*, ὃς *ἐξ ἐμεῦ οἴσεται οὐδέν*[†].

To hear Sappho on Æolian flute, and Alcæus striking his golden harp, would not arrest their busy impatient tongues. The shades admire the high songsters, uttering things worthy of sacred silence to be heard; but the vulgar, with dense shoulders, drinks rather its own revolutions—battles and tyrants driven out—

"Utrumque sacro digna silentio,
Mirantur umbræ dicere; sed magis
Pugnas, et exactos tyrannos,
Densum humeris bibit aure vulgus[‡]."

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, accepts and crowns the poets with such honour, that we may truly say she loves their race—

Φίλησε δὲ φῦλον ἀοιδῶν[§].

Even her austerest orders and writers seem to have reserved for them a corner in their hearts. Nicholas Crusenius, the Augustinian, in the history of his order, takes care to add in summing up the praises of Dionysius Mutinensis, the twelfth general, that he was the familiar friend of Francis Petrarch[||]. Indeed, they all had affinity with the muse as the very nature of things required; and we may remark, that even the grave Bossuet, in his rapid glance at universal history, finds place between the brief record of the vicissitude of empires to notice that Alexander spared the house and descendants of Pindar through admiration for his odes. Independent of all its positive precepts, poesy, by its magic wand, removes many of the difficulties which beset the other roads of human life. It introduces men into a purer and nobler sphere than that which is falsely called reality. It demands a flight higher than the reason's

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[*] Phædo.
[†] Theocrit.
[‡] Hor. Carm. ii. 10.
[§] viii. 481.
[||] Crusen. Monasticon August. Pan. iii. c. 14.

ken. It shows a world grander and fairer than that of men such as sin has made it. It leads the spirit on in an ecstasy of admiration, of sweet sorrow, or of unearthly joy, to the music of harmonious and not wholly intelligible words, raising in the mind beauteous and transcendent images—scenes as if beneath the night of wide and vaulted caves, whose roofs are bright with starry gems through which we stray, while from their deep and dark green chasms shades, beautiful and white, amid sweet sounds will sweep across our path like swift and lovely dreams that walk the waves of sleep. Poesy leads us, as in an enchanted bark seen in boyish dream, gliding over translucid lakes, "amidst darksome rocks, whence icicles depend so stainless that their white and glittering spires tinge not the moon's pure beam," beholding skies, and woods, and mountains beautiful and majestic, contributing to wean the soul from the monotonous delusions of this wearied and wearying earth;—

> " Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
> To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire."

The ancients recognized the close connexion between poetic genius and familiarity with the highest and the noblest themes; which must always of themselves constitute an avenue to truth. " Yes," exclaims the shade of Æschylus, " such are the subjects that poets ought to choose, and lo! in fact, what services the most illustrious amongst them have rendered from the first; Orpheus taught holy mysteries and the horror of murder; Musæus, oracles and remedies; Hesiod, agriculture; and the divine Homer, the love of honour and renown *." So, too, the Syracusan songster, as essentially divine in its object, estimates the poet's aim, saying,

> *Αἰεὶ τοῦτο Διὸς κούραις μέλει, αἰὲν ἀοιδοῖς,*
> *Ὑμνεῖν ἀθανάτους, ὑμνεῖν ἀγαθῶν κλέα ἀνδρῶν* †.

Milton supposes the transition slight when he describes himself " led from the laureat fraternity of poets to the shady spaces of philosophy, to the divine volumes of Plato, and his equal. Xenophon; where," he adds, " if I should tell ye what I learnt of chastity and love, I mean that which is truly so, whose charming cup is only virtue, which she bears in her hand to those who are worthy (the rest are cheated with a thick intoxicating potion, which a certain sorceress, the abuser of love's name, carries about); and how the first and chiefest office of love begins and ends in the soul, producing those happy twins of her divine generation, knowledge and virtue: with such abstracted sublimities as these, it might be worth your listening, readers."

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* Aristoph. Ran.

† Theocrit.

But why linger with those that are only on the road of old philosophy? Why not press on, gathering hints from the smiles and winks of the poor Muses, to that Church which uses all that can be found of sweet and beautiful in nature or in art to direct men to herself, when in an incommensurably higher sense than that of genius, or of any joy which riseth up as from the human world, she will "clothe with golden clouds the desert of our life." For it is Catholicity that supplies poets with a theme truly worthy. Faith, with its immortal annals, leaves them no wish to fly back to Parnassus, or to the barren haunts of fairies and pixies—to what those who are without faith now style "the beautiful fictions of their fathers, woven in superstition's web," but invites them to celebrate true heroes, worthy of all that genius can imagine in their praise, and of an everlasting memory. For even from those who would fondly cling to it, the old poetic world has passed away for ever with the blindness which it suffered; and the new antagonism to faith, if consistent with itself, is powerless for song. What is its history? A blank, my reader, unless it be enough to hear of kings slain on scaffolds, of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts, of whole nations steeped in irreverence and wrong; of the upshot of purposes mistaken fallen on the inventors' heads. But who that has heard the ancient tragedy, proclaiming her mission in the darkest times, will not perceive that little is ever wanting to make safe the guidance of the muse to the true conquerors of the world, as well as to the faith which animates them? Apollo, we hear, entones his hymns with joyous chants, and with his golden bow strikes on his harmonious lute: and will not the muse of happier days celebrate those whose labours surpassed all that has been sung by ancient poets of the fabled Hercules? The praise of noble achievements are honours due also unto the Christian dead. They purged the forest of the Church of the lions which made their dens within it; they adorned her with the spoils, and transferred to her innocent banners the terrible head of the monster. They wounded with their bow the savage race of Centaurs inhabiting the mountains; their victories had for witnesses Ætna, with its caverns and its sombre forests. The Augean stables by them indeed were purified. The scourge of husbandmen fell likewise under their blows. They mounted chariots and tamed wilder coursers than those of Diomede, subjecting to the bridle those furious and before-unmanageable steeds, which in their bloody mangers fed on human limbs; they provided a passage for the torrent, and pierced with their darts the murderers of their hosts; other Cyanuses, like the inhospitable tyrant of Amphaneus, they came to the true gardens of the Hesperides, to the nymphs of harmonious chants, to gather the golden apples on the branches laden with fruit, killing the fiery dragon which

guarded and concealed in his entwining folds the inaccessible trunk. They penetrated to the retreats of the immense ocean, to provide security for navigators; then advancing to the palace of those who bore the earth, they helped them to endure the burden; they put their hands to the celestial vault, and with their invincible force upheld the starry firmament; they marched against the army of invaders; Rome received the spoils of barbarous nations, and Europe still preserves them. With new power armed, which mortals named scholastic, they smote the hydra of a thousand heads, true destructive scourge of men. Conquerors in all their combats, to terminate their labours they sailed to the tearful Hades, which was their last victory; and there brothers, friends of the Anointed One, themselves anointed and copartners of the Saviour, they dried up the fountains of tears for ever. In fine, to conclude all, by their labours they secured for mortals a tranquil existence, having subdued the monsters which had filled with woe and terror the innumerable paths of human life *. Thus, as a recent poet † says, "while on new thoughts men ancient verses make," they will be directed by poesy to the Catholic Church, as the source of highest and noblest inspiration; for there is found the first condition of what it seeks to create, the manifest intervention of a superhuman power in the affairs of this world, or, in other words, the wonderful—which is the matter of an epic poem—not that marvellous of convention, that mixture of abstraction and mythology which casts such an icy chill over our modern Iliads, but a natural and true source of astonishment, such as the bird of Mæonian song would now with rapture feed upon till it died with the rapture of its sweetness.

Poesy concerned now with the glories of our Christian history can thus direct, by the true heroes, to that faith which was the soul of their achievements, not to the gods ordaining destruction to men, as Homer says—

Ἵνα ᾖσι καὶ ἐσσομένοισιν ἀοιδή ‡.

But to the Catholic Church, ordaining peace and safety for the human race—to the Church inspiring those noble actions which poets strictly Catholic, like Calderon de la Barca, have held up to the admiration of the world; for who can behold his sublime drama, and not feel drawn towards the bright effulgence from which such lustrous beams descend? Let us take but the one example of his constant prince; and "let gorgeous tragedy in scepter'd pall come sweeping by." The facts from which he drew its plot are briefly told.—In 1437, the two infants of Portugal—Fernando, grand master of the order of Avis, and Henry,

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* Hercul. furens. † André Chénier. ‡ viii. 580.

grand master of the order of Christ—with the consent of their brother King Edward, made an expedition into Africa at the head of eight thousand men. Surrounded before Tangiers with an overwhelming force, they were permitted to re-embark on condition of giving up Ceuta, Fernando remaining as a hostage; but as he refused to sacrifice a Christian people, he died in horrible captivity in 1443, and was honoured as a martyr, his remains being recovered twenty-nine years after, and translated to the monastery of La Batailla. Such is the history; and the surpassing grandeur with which, in conformity to it, all the supernatural graces belonging to the highest and purest ideal of the Christian character are represented in action, on the occasion of these great tragical events, will show that poets can find no purer sources of inspiration in regard to their own art, than the common fountains of Catholicity which yield faith and virtue to mankind. Thus when told that he must proceed a prisoner to Fez, the prince replies, "Every step that I take towards my prison will bring me nearer to the divine sphere to which I aspire." To his brother Henry on taking leave of him he says, "Henry, I remain prisoner without fearing either captivity, or torture, or the rigour of fortune. You will say to the king, our brother, that in my calamities it will be for him to conduct himself as a Christian prince. I charge you to recommend him to act as a Christian king." On his brother Henry's return, clad in black, the captive prince receives him with these words, "Dear Henry, what signify these weeds of mourning? But, no, I understand you sufficiently by your silent looks; but weep not if you come to announce to me an eternal captivity—it is the object of my desires. You ought rather to congratulate me and put on festive apparel." "The king," replies Henry, "has ordered in his testament that Ceuta be given up for your ransom, and therefore"—"Enough," he exclaims, interrupting him, "do not finish—enough, Henry, I charge you; such words are unworthy, not only of an Infant of Portugal — not only of a grand master, who serves under the banner of Christ, but of the vilest wretch — but of a barbarian who has never known the light of our holy faith. My brother, whom God has called to himself, inserted that clause in his will not with the intention of its being fulfilled, but only to show his affection for me. Order Ceuta to be given up merely means, make unheard-of, prodigious efforts for my liberty. For I pray you, how could a Catholic king, how could a wise and just king consent to deliver to the Moor a city which cost him his own blood? Since you know that it was he who with no other armour than his shield and sword scaled its proud ramparts, and first planted on them the banner of Portugal; and this is the least consideration. For this city confesses the true God

according to the Catholic faith : it has obtained churches in which his sacred worship is celebrated with respect and love : would it be worthy of a pious prince, of a Christian, of a Portuguese, to consent that these temples of the Supreme Master should behold the Mussulman shades intercepting the divine light from the true sun that fills them ; and that their sinister crescents should eclipse the holy splendours which enlighten Christian eyes ? What ! Suffer these holy chapels to become stables for animals, or, what I should dread more, mosques ? Here my tongue is enchained, and grief makes me dumb. Yes, at the mere thought of such profanation I feel my heart break, my hair stand erect, an icy chill pervade my whole body ! Stables and mangers were once the temple of God. They received .... but mosques ! it would be the tomb of our honour ! the handwriting of our infamy for the whole world to read. Here had God a holy asylum, and Christians desired it, to give it to the demon ! Should we dare to affront God within his own House ? lead impiety to it, protect it there, and, to establish it in peace, chase our God from his altars ? The Christians who inhabit this city, and who have all their property there, might prevaricate, perhaps, and abandon their faith rather than lose their fortune. Is it for us to expose them to such a sin ? to give to Moors the tender children of the faithful, to become accustomed to their rites ? Would it be well to abandon so many men to a hard captivity, to save the life of one whose loss is of such little importance ? For, in fine, what am I ? Am I more than a man ? If born Infant, consider that being now a slave I have no longer rank or nobility. Being a captive, no one should call me Infant. Why then should my ransom be estimated at such a price ? Henry, return to our country, and say that you have left me buried in Africa. Christians, Fernand, the grand master of Avis, has ceased to live. Moors, you have a slave more : all the world shall know that at this day a prince, constant in misfortunes, glorifies the Catholic faith ; for if it were only that Ceuta contained one church consecrated to the conception of the Queen of Heaven, I would lose my life a thousand times for its defence and deliverance."

" Then you rest my slave," cries the Mahometan king. " True," replies Fernand, " and in that respect you have but weak revenge. Man springs from the earth only to make a short journey on its surface. I owe you more thanks than hatred, since you show me the shortest road to arrive at the end of my course." " Well," cries the king, " your life shall be a slow death ! you shall see my rigour." " And you," replies the Catholic prince, " shall see my patience. All your efforts will be vain. Whatever sufferings you may inflict, I shall remain immoveable in the faith. It is the torch which guides me,

the laurel which crowns me. You will not triumph over the Church; try, if you please, to triumph over me. God will defend my cause, since it is for Him that I suffer. To you, noble Don Juan, I have a prayer to address. When I shall have breathed my last sigh, clothe me in the mantle of my order, which you will find in my prison, and mark the place of my burial; for though I die in captivity, I hope one day or other to be ransomed, and have part in the suffrages of the altar. Oh, my God! I have given thee many churches, and thou wilt not refuse me one for a grave."

Twenty-nine years after his death, King Alphonso, after a brilliant expedition into Africa, exchanged a prisoner for the body of the prince. Calderon concludes his drama with these solemn obsequies, at which the king assists with his whole army, while the apparition of Fernando, again in complete steel, clothed in his Capitular mantle, and carrying a taper in his hand, slowly and stately enters, and with martial stalk and solemn march majestical, passes before their oppressed and fear-surprised eyes.

What think you now, wanderer, of the side to which the Muses beckon you? Is it to Hercules, pious Æneas, Juno and Minerva, or to the Catholic constant prince who thus lives, fights, and dies? Yes, the Catholic faith has made a new line of road for poets, on which invention is unnecessary. All is ready-prepared for them in religious annals; and this is itself a novel fact, which the ancients never anticipated. The sage Plutarch, as least, does not seem to have contemplated its possibility, since he supposes that the themes of poets are at the mercy of every national prejudice; for he says it is a dangerous thing to incur the anger of a city whose language is cultivated, and where the Muses are in honour, for that the poets will prevail over the gravest history. The Catholic poet has no temptation, and indeed no power, to contradict, through national jealousy, the historian of any country, when he sings the heroes whose fame is precious to the universal Church; nor does he incur the risk of verifying what the Greek tragedian affirms, that when two poets undertake a similar work, the Muses themselves excite discord between them*, since the broad domains of Catholicity have space for all, breathing peace and union and charity for all; atmosphere congenial to all true poesy, and which needs must be inhaled by those who traverse them.

But again, in general the love of poesy includes a love of ancient memories, which, like all plain old things, points significantly

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* Androm. 437.

to the Catholic Church, than which nothing is plainer, simpler, older, though ever flourishing and ever new :

> " Will no one tell me what she sings ?
> Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
> For old, unhappy, far-off things,
> And battles long ago ;
> Or is it some more humble lay,
> Familiar matter of to-day ?
> Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain
> That has been, and may be again ?"

The chances then are multiplied in favour of your hearing somewhat of the charity of the Catholic Church, or of the sufferings of the Catholic Church ; for her image is every where soothing with some simple trait of primitive times, as if she recalled youth to each man—a gleam of bliss, a shade of vanished days. " I found him over Juliet's tomb at Verona," says the author of a poet's life. " It is a plain, open, and partly-decayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves, the place appropriate to the legend being blighted as their love." There is recalled the hermit's tenderness. Or would you invite one like Ermold the Black, who followed the host of Louis-le-Debonnaire, and who sung his victory ?

> " And he began a long, low, simple song
> Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong."

Then too shall we hear of monks and mossy cells, and pilgrims to the holy shrine, and all proclaiming that innocence had then protection from their faith.

> " Pandite nunc, Musæ, præsentia numina vatum,
> Scitis enim, nec vos fallit spatiosa vetustas *."

But mark how every path of poesy now leads to the Catholic Church. For is it again that of arms trod by him

> ——— " cui carmina semper
> Et citharæ cordi, numerosque intendere nervis ;
> Semper equos atque arma virùm, pugnasque canebat † ?"

Then Tasso meets you and points to the red-crossed knight, and to the hermit Peter, and to the holy sepulchre ; and the same images return in every chant which of yore great bards beside

> " In sage and solemn tunes have sung
> Of turneys and of trophies hung."

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* Met. xv. 13.

† Æn. ix. 776.

Or, leaving the light of the sun, is it the mysterious descents of Homer and of Virgil that we tread?

—— *ὄφρα ἴδῃς νέκυας καὶ ἀτερπέα χῶρον*[*];

Then meet we the grand imposing shade of Dante, waving us on from hell to heaven, and through human misery to the joys and trophies of the Church triumphant. "Lofty and sublime in great things," says Palmieri, of this representative of Catholicity in the regions of poesy, "true and exquisite painter in the least details, simple, sweet, gay, grave, abundant, or admirably concise; not alone poet, but transcendent orator, philosopher, and theologian, Dante merits such admiration that it is better to be silent than attempt by words inadequate to express his praise;" though another poet, in few words, seems to convey it well, saying simply of himself,

"I pass'd each day where Dante's bones are laid."

The genius of Dante, moreover, leads us back to the long series of attested visions which, like that of the monk of Evesham, seem to have suggested not alone the plan, but even many of the details and images of the divine journey[†]. The vision of Alberic, the monk of Mount Cassino; the vision of Oen, who in a glimpse of Paradise beheld so great a multitude of men and women, that he thought there could be no more place for the rest of the human race that should come afterwards[‡]; the vision of Thurcell, on All Saints' Day, related by himself in good English, to the astonishment of all who knew him to be a poor ignorant peasant, void of eloquence by nature, sublime narrative undoubtedly, which excited the sighs and lamentations of all the hearers[§],—these, and similar records, commencing with Christianity itself, will naturally lead the mind to reflect on the solemn truths of the Catholic religion, with which they at least present an unconcerted and exact conformity. Or do you turn your steps to a third way, that of human life in its endless variety of scenes and characters? Then the road of Calderon and Shakspeare is fraught with guides that direct us to the Catholic religion as to peace and truth, to justice and to beauty in its mystic sense; for, as D'Avila says, "to constitute beauty four things are necessary—to be whole without deficiency of parts—to have the right proportion between members—to have purity of colour—and sufficient magnitude," all which conditions belong to the Church, from which emanate in morals the perfect, the harmonious, the pure, and the magnificent. Under its im-

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[*] xi. 93.

[†] Mat. Paris ad ann. 1196.

[‡] Mat. Paris ad ann. 1153.

[§] Id. ad ann. 1206.

pressions there can be nothing exclusive, nothing too prominent and consequently exposed to ridicule, as eccentric and extravagant. The same path leads to love and veneration for all the gracious variety of holy institutions which Catholicism employs to minister to human wants. The voice that comes to us is not "Respect the asylum of the Nymphs, and the retreats where Pan makes to sound the rustic flute," but respect the hooded head and the silent cloister; for those who feel the sweet peaceful influence of gentle poesy, cannot but feel the charm of the spiritual beauty which the Catholic Church has canonized, and cannot but love it in the capacity spoken of in the rule of St. Augustin—"tanquam spiritualis pulchritudinis amatores." Therefore, alluding to the love for Shakspeare which makes some now so anxious to preserve his house, an able writer says, "Men who begin a pilgrimage to Stratford may end with a pilgrimage to Loretto." Some may seek to contest the reality of such connexions, but while Catholicity lasts in a nation, art will not pervert its end or falsify its divine mission; it will not idealize crime, it will not gild what is impure. As we can witness in the Spanish drama, it tends to elevate the soul; it seeks to excite all generous sentiments, and then brings them in presence of the most intense passions and the most legitimate and bitter sorrows. "Poesy under that influence," continues a modern critic, "did not drag its wings through the mire, saying, I put on new beauty and youth. Its flight was towards heaven, not towards earth,—towards the life of the soul and of thought, not towards the sepulchre and the abyss. The hideous was not crowned as queen; orgies were not enthroned. The poets of these ages preserved the holy love of the beautiful; and they directed their muse in favour of love and virtue, of purity and sincerity, of devotion and moral force. Woe to the ages of decline when the poet forgets this task! when he draws from his brazen lyre sharp hoarse tones, accompanied with maledictions and scornful irony! Woe to the times of dissolution and despair, when poesy, mysterious echo of our soul, admires nothing, hopes for nothing, loves nothing, grows weary of belief, when poesy is no longer the hymn of joy, the accent of love, but the sound that indicates the agency of a society that is already in the convulsions of its end*!" Or lastly, do you seek the fourth and higher way of poetry, guarded by the true Urania? Whither does that tend, then, but to cells and holy choirs? for it brings you not to the retreat of Pan, or to that grotto near the rocks of Macra where the daughters of Agrantos in their light dance tread the green sward at the foot of the temple of Pallas, to the varied melody of the rustic flute†.

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* Phil. Chasles, études sur l'Espagne.

† Ion.

Nor does it lead you to the Muses nine, nor to the top of old Olympus, but to the eternal Wisdom, to spirits heavenly born, who even while on earth converse in presence of the Almighty Father, pleased with their celestial song; for all the fabled triumphs of the old heroic world, and all the praises of the faithless men in recent times of sad revolt against the Church, will far be found unworthy to compare with Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling, where God is praised aright, and godlike men, the Holiest of Holies, and his saints.

Do you ask then in fine, once more, whither point the guides that tread this path? To name them is a sufficient answer. It is St. Gregory Nyssen, St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, St. Damasus, St. Ephrem of Syria, whose poems were expressly provided as an antidote for the heretical poetry of Harmonius, son of Bardesanes, and as a guide to orthodox doctrine *. Or it is the early monastic poets, whose hymns were chanted in the cloisters of the east and west. Juvencus, Victorinus, Prudentius, Venantius, Fortunatus, Cœlius Sedulius, Conantius, St. Leander, St. Isidore, Bede, St. Gregory the Great, Paulus Diaconus, Theodulph of Orleans, St. Paulinus of Aquileia, Lupus, Rhaban Maur, St. Eulogius the Martyr of Cordova, who composed his hymns while in a dungeon of the Moors †, and St. Peter Damian, Metellus of Tegernsea, Albericus of Mount Cassino, Peter of Cluny, Godfridus Vindocinensis, Pope Innocent III., St. Thomas Aquinas, Jacoponus, St. Francis of Assisi, Conrad the Carthusian, the monastic poets of St. Gall, and following them in later times, Sannazarius, Cerda, and innumerable others who as poets, if not by deep humility restrained, might each exclaim,

> "Ore legar populi; perque omnia secula famâ,
> Si quid habent veri vatum præsagia, vivam."

Such are the men you meet on the road of poets; and if you be indeed led by the love of song, will it not appear as if the path were marked out for you in inseparable union with them? Can this displease you? Will you look sadly whenever crossways meet, on finding that neither take a different direction, as when we read in the fable of Aslauga's Knight, that it seemed at such times as if a tear gathered in the downcast eye? Oh, no! you will rather exult, and follow them, led on by Heaven and crowned with joy at last.

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* Theodoret, Hist. Ec. iv. 27.

† Faustinus Arevalus, Hymnodia Hispanica, 109.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROAD OF ROMANCE.

ASCENDING now an elevated tract, our path leads through many spreading oaks, where mistletoe hanging from their branches can be found, and fern growing high around their huge trunks. Further on, the rocks piled in fantastic forms, and wild blasted heaths, extending far to the west, present a scene appropriate to the title of the road : then, after some space, the forest closes in on all sides ; and we have to thread our way between the trees in silence and obscurity.

Among the avenues presented in the morning of life, that of poetry, to the influence of which the impressions arising from the first observations of the world so powerfully conduce, has already brought us in full view of the bourn to which all wishes tend. The path we are now to follow, long, parallel, but at length slightly divergent, leading to what may be called the enchanted part of the forest, invites those who are embued with a taste for the marvellous, or for those moving and heroic impressions which lead some to superstition, and others to a love of what is termed the romantic literature.

To the whole tract of wonders then, beginning in fiction and ending in truth, we now advance by the road of romance, which branches from the last. As we advance up the steep, the forest becomes wilder still. We pass near a torrent. A pine,

> "Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the vacancy,
> Its swinging boughs to each inconstant blast
> Yielding one only response at each pause,
> In most familiar cadence with the howl,
> The thunder, and the hiss of homeless streams,
> Mingling its solemn song ; whilst the broad river,
> Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged path,
> Falls into that immeasurable void,
> Scattering its waters to the passing winds."

Striking into the narrow dark by-paths which lead here through the moral forest, we must expect to stumble often over the windings of wide-spreading roots, and the abrupt obstructions of decayed trunks nearly level with the soil. Since many will persist in choosing to explore them, we must follow ; and ere long we shall observe that even these turnings can lead men eventually to the

same divine centre of all pleasure and of all astonishment. But the way is not wholly without traces of art: many ruins and vestiges of the olden times of Catholicity are found near it; for, as Goethe says, "a country is romantic when it awakens in us a sentiment of the grandeur of the past, or, in other terms, when it gives us solitude, memories, and regrets."

Meeting then with one "lone sitting by the shores of old romance," searching for some towered height embosomed in the woods, afar off, and beautiful as the enchanted castle of Claude, methinks I hear some voice demand, as the Abbot asks Orlando in the Morgante Maggiore of Pulci, "By what fortune do I find you in this obscure wild place?" and a reply like that given there, "It is the will of God. Many and diverse are the paths he points out for us by which to arrive at his city. Some walk to it with the sword—some with pastoral staff—some by a straight, others by a winding path—some in darkness, others in light. Nature makes the inclination different, and therefore there are different ways for us to take; enough if we all arrive safely at one and the same place; the last as well as the first. We are all pilgrims through many kingdoms. We all wish to go to Rome, Orlando, but we go picking out our journey through different roads. Such is the trouble in body and soul brought upon us by that sin of the old apple. Day and night am I here with my book in hand—day and night do you ride about, holding your sword, and sweating oft both in sun and shadow, and all to get round at last to the home from which we departed. I say, all out of anxiety and hope to get back to our home of old. And the giant hearing them talk thus, shed tears also *."

Our purpose now then is to observe how even the dark and perilous passes of romantic fiction and of demoniac art, in which this riding about the world by day and by night involves many, can lead to the home of old, or to the Catholic Church, which shows truth more strange and beautiful than any fiction, and wonders more astonishing than any wrought or feigned to be wrought by the power of its adversary. How many have at some period or other trodden this path! and do you know what wisdom stirs amongst these branches? Come, sir, now I am for you again: pray you sit by us, and hear a tale. Merry or sad shall't be? a sad tale's best perhaps for such a spot as this. "It is a pity," says Antonio de Guevara, preacher of the Emperor Charles V., "to see, day and night, many consuming themselves by dint of reading vain books, such as Giglan, Lancelot, Fierubras, the four sons of Aymon and Tristan †," and yet how many grave, thoughtful men, like Johnson and Milton, how many of

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* L. Hunt's transl.

† L'Horloge des Princes, Disc. Prel.

the holy like St. Theresa and St. Francis have at some moments of their lives been attracted by them! "These are my knights of the round table," the latter used to say, "who speed to deserts and remote places, to devote themselves to meditation and prayer*." We read in Zuñiga, that in 1247, Saint Ferdinand, setting out for the conquest of Seville, took with him a jongleur, juglar, called Nicholas of the Romances. You see then who have passed. The way indeed is wild and darksome: but the holy as well as the profane wanderers leave what may be called their "patteran or trail," by following which we need never lose them though venturing through horrid wildernesses and dreary defiles: for, coming to the cross roads which invariably occur, we shall find that they have left as it were some handful of grass lying at a small distance from each other down one of these roads, or a cross drawn at the entrance of a road, the stem of it pointing down it, or a cleft stick stuck at the side of the road, with a little arm in the cleft, pointing down the road which has been taken; and if we only attend to such marks we may be able to rejoin those with whom it is well on every road of the forest of life to keep company to the end.

The taste for wonders, though classed here among the impressions of a wandering life out of doors, begins early, and is developed in the paternal house.

> "The waving banner, and the clapping door,
> The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
> The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
> The flapping-bat, the night-song of the breeze;
> Aught they behold or hear their thought appals,
> As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls."

The very house often contributes, as the stranger found. You approached that which beheld his childhood by a long avenue of ancient limes, which was interrupted by a lake, on the shore of which stood a grotto, with some old inscriptions about the days of man withering like grass, but the ivy nearly covered them. There was Mrs. Radcliff's fishing-house in the woods, whence the lute was heard at sunset. Nothing was wanting, —nothing lost on him. Then you passed under beech and elm, whose intermingled branches formed a lofty and impervious arch above the road, which as you advanced further became nearly dark at noon from the dense shadows. On a sudden you emerged from the thicket, and the old house was there. From a distance you might have taken it for the chateau in the woods near which St. Aubert died. How many domestic traditions too conspire in the same direction! It was whispered that the

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* Regula S. Francisc. Collatio xvi.

mother of that house, loved as its soul, had been seen before her marriage in a dream; and that arriving one day, an unknown visitor at the gate, clad in deep mourning weeds, her first husband having been slain within a month after his marriage; as she passed through the hall to the apartment of an aged lady whom she came to visit, she was observed and recognized as the selfsame figure who had mysteriously been pointed out as the future spouse. So went the tale, which, however fanciful, might recal what is related by grave witnesses on a subject far otherwise interesting of St. Nicholas of the Sarrasins, a gentleman of Sienna, who beheld St. Catherine of Sienna for the first time, in a dream, and who the next day said to his wife, "I am sure I have seen that Catherine whom you have so often pressed me to visit; I will visit her now to satisfy my curiosity,"—the moment he saw the saint, he recognized her by her countenance and voice as being the person who had appeared to him; and he was converted in consequence from his wicked life.

Not, however, to halt thus, listening to things which cannot impart mutual light, since what is connected with the saints belongs to a different order from all other narratives, the inference at which I desire to arrive is, merely that the minds of men are in general tuned early by domestic associations to the wild music that is heard along the road of wonders, which leads at first through the dangerous bounds of the romantic literature, where the passes are more or less perilous, according to the side to which they turn: for works of the class that corresponds to them are threefold; some, like those of the ancient chivalry, being professedly Catholic; others, as those which attach their admirers to the banks of Leman Lake, and at times to Abbotsford, openly opposed and hostile to the faith; in fine, others like those of Mrs. Ratcliff, and, in part, of the great Scotch bard, neutral. All however indirectly lead to tracts commanding views of Catholicity. The first resemble those sweet paths by the side of main roads through the forest, where with the fresh shade, and the flowers and variety of dark hill and dale which the beaten way avoids, you enjoy the advantage of security against being lost; for the knights, those I mean who have been sneered away, will never lead you to misbelief or to systematic sin. They are seen either timely penitent, like the knight of Ariosto, who becomes ashamed of that passion for an infidel beauty, which the heavenly powers had punished by depriving him of his senses; or converted in extremity, as when Agrian, after receiving his mortal wound, called Orlando with a gentle voice to come close to him, and said, as well as he could, "I believe in Him who died on the cross. Baptize me, I pray thee, with the fountain. May He who came to save all the rest of the world save me!" when both wept; or they are found ever

riding through the forest, full of heavenly thoughts, as in the Jerusalem of Tasso, where Sophronia consoles her lover Olindo. when both are about to perish, saying, "Think of the reward which God has promised. Cast thine eyes upward and behold. See how beautiful is the sky! how the sun seems to invite thee towards it with its splendour!" and piously resolved to detain no one long in their company, which they acknowledge vain. They would tell indeed of many a clash of arms in these shady recesses, of many great things done there by knights from all quarters—the Tristans and the Lancelots, the Gawains and others of the round table. They offer a kind of knightly escort: but, after a few steps taken with them, we are led by them to the venerable hermit, or to the cloister of monks, under the impression of whose wise discourse they leave us, and return as if to render the same service to others. Many therefore, to the knight himself, address the words of Clorinda to Tancred, "'Twas thou that took'st me out of the false path, and made me worthy of admission among saints and angels." Milton ascribes his love of purity to his early converse with the lofty fables of the old knighthood. "There," he says. "I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befel him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies, by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn; only this my mind gave me, that every free and gentle spirit, without that oath, ought to be born a knight, nor needed to expect the gilt spur, or the laying of a sword upon his shoulder to stir him up, both by his counsel and his arms, to secure and protect the weakness of any attempted chastity. So that even these books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and stedfast observation of that virtue which abhors the society of the vicious." Spenser prefers to the manners of the world around him the virtues of the old romance, then only in name preserved, saying—

"Of which though present age doe plenteous seeme,
  Yet, being matcht with plaine antiquitie,
Ye will them all but fayned showes esteeme,
Which carry colours faire that feeble eies misdeeme.
  But in the triall of true courtesie,
Its now so farre from that which then it was,
  That it indeed is nought but forgerie,
Fashioned to please the eies of them that pas,
Which see not perfect things but in a glas;
  Yet is that glasse so gay that it can blynd

The wiser sight, to thinke gold that is bras;
But virtue's seat is deepe within the mynd,
And not in outward shows but inward thoughts defynd *."

Without multiplying words, it is obvious that this deep clear spiritual view cast on all virtues in the old romance must point to that true religion which had elevated and purified all the ways of human life, so that even old fictions surpass present realities. The second class of the romantic writers, though avowedly hostile to the faith, points nevertheless to the same central focus, as will be clear from a glance at them, which should be transient indeed; for these are unwholesome, like the flowers of the laburnum, which the bees will never touch †. Here the marvellous disappears, and false wild notions of human life are substituted for those which the Catholic Church had infused through Christendom. The cry of these writers is that of Clytemnestra in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, "We want no prophets." Yet, in spite of their avowed aim, they point in some things right; for that new Heloise, as a modern writer remarks, "derives its fame from the observation of human nature contained in it, and from the religious unintentional direction. Establishing that natural dispositions are powerless for good without the aid of God, and that man cannot be virtuous without help from on high, to be obtained by prayer, it leads in reality to Rome. The fundamental ideas of its author proceed thus in fact towards the truth of Catholicism, though the sophist himself can never reach it. In spite of himself this free-thinker, as he is termed, leaves the domain of his philosophy to enter on that of the Catholic Church, to which he is unconsciously attracted by the fire of his genius and the power of the truth from which he flies ‡." Since his time more audacious scribes, with millions of mischiefs in their hearts, have substituted still more malicious and cautious works of the same class; but though forming a path on which raves a more insatiable minotaur than that which only demanded yearly seven boys and seven girls, there are not wanting upon it openings and facilities to enable those who follow it to behold and reach the security of truth. Attalus Philometor, king of Pergamus, used to cultivate, as Plutarch relates, all sorts of poisonous plants, not only jusquiame and hellebore, but even hemlock, wolfbane, and dorycinium, which he used to plant and sow in his gardens, and gather with his own hand in their season §. Modern romantic literature resembles such a garden; and as on hearing named these poisons an instinct of self-preservation suggests a scrutiny of each special

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* vi. † Plin. N. H. xvi. 31.

‡ Etudes sur les idées et sur leur union au sein du Catholicisme, 1.

§ Vit. Demet.

antidote that nature, as Pliny shows, so wonderfully provides, so the sense which every honest mind must entertain of the turpitude and extent of the moral danger on this cursed path, will avail to lead men to that Church which has ever been engaged in supplying remedies against all such deadly composts. Immediately after the invention of printing, the Catholic Church foresaw the danger arising from an abuse of the new art, and endeavoured to ward it off. The Church assembled in the council of Lateran, under Julius II., while styling the invention a divine favour, complained that already its masters were counteracting her divine mission by leading men from holy truth, printing books against faith by attacks against the reputation of men in authority, and by furnishing readings for the people which, instead of edifying, would give birth to offences against faith and morals, and a multitude of scandals; therefore she required, under pain of excommunication, that all books printed should first obtain the sanction of the bishop of the diocese. The evil however, as experience proved, was not to be avoided. As a recent author says, "the art of printing lied from its cradle *;" and so Puyherbault found occasion, in 1549, for writing a book, now forgotten, though filled with curious historical details, entitled, "Theotimus, de tollendis malis libris." Here the whole ground is loathsome; spiders and heavy-gaited toads lie in our way, doing annoyance to the careless feet. I cannot loiter to name one by one the fictions on this road, which, like a Medusa's head, can affright and inspire with wholesome disgust the startled wanderer, and induce him to retrace his steps as if the cry of Perseus sounded in his ears—

——— "vultus avertite vestros
Si quis amicus adest †"

'Tis seldom when the bee doth leave her comb in the dead carrion; but diabolic malice against God's friends now learns even to allay such terrors, or repugnance while seasoning the romantic literature; and there is occasion for Shakspear's exclamation. "Is it possible the spells of France should juggle men into such strange mysteries?" Benetted victim of these foul webs, "I quit thee; time is precious here; I lose too much thus measuring my pace with thine ‡." We come, then, to the third road that invites the lovers of romance, and must observe, as briefly as we can, the guidance that is found along the neutral way. At first we should be arrested by what may be termed their geographic direction. Until the great northern bard had guided

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* Phil. Chasles, Etudes sur le moyen age.

† Met. v. 6.

‡ Dante, Purg. ii. 24.

the imagination of Europe to the highlands of his country, the ways of romantic fiction led generally to the warm and happy regions where faith had retained her throne inviolable; and, what is worthy of remark, this direction seems only to have commenced when the shades and cold of heresy had closed over the northern nations; for in the romances of chivalry, as in the monastic collections of Cæsar of Heisterbach and John Major, the scene is often laid in England, Friesland, and Sweden; but as if instinctively struggling to escape from the desolation of the moral winter, those who sought to please the imagination in subsequent times, turned their faces southward, and led their votaries to Italy and Spain, presenting them with objects under every form that familiarized them with Catholic institutions, and often unintentionally fired with a true love their insatiate hearts. Thus Byron sings of Venice—

> "I loved her from my boyhood,—she to me
> Was as a fairy city of the heart,
> Rising like water-columns from the sea,
> Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
> And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespear's art,
> Had stamp'd in me her image." ———

For what followers of such guides have not the very names of Languedoc and Gascony, of Roussillon, Verona, and Tholouse an early and indescribable charm? When we follow some of these wanderers, and hear, "as they descended, how they saw at a distance on the right one of the grand passes of the Pyrenees into Spain, gleaming with its battlements and towers to the splendour of the setting rays, yellow tops of woods colouring the steeps below, while far above aspired the snowy points of the mountains, still reflecting a rosy hue," how prepared are we for feeling a fresh interest in the religious deeds of old Catholic history there so gloriously achieved? Their songs and music even are similarly directed. Whoever forgets the inn at which Emily first caught a strain of Italian melody on Italian ground; where, as she sat after supper at a little window that opened upon the country, observing an effect of moonlight on the broken surface of the mountains, she heard from below the long-drawn notes of a violin, of such tone and delicacy of expression as harmonized exactly with the tender emotions she was indulging, and both charmed and surprised her? Who will not find some proof, even along this simple path, that where a population remains Catholic, those who mourn will find sympathy, kind voices attuned to their own in suffering, and even for each tear a tear?—

> ——————— "Strike up, my master,
> But touch the strings with a religious softness,

Teach sounds to languish through the night's dull ear,
Till Melancholy starts from off her couch,
And Carelessness grows convert to Attention."

"Passing by Ovidos," says Lord Carnarvon, "the evening sun lit up the walls of an old Saracenic castle, upon which a boy was standing, and playing most sweetly on the flageolet." To such bright moments memory will recur; and then the traveller long past, looks back and asks where is that poor musician now? what have been his sorrows, needing faith; medicinal consolation? 'Tis well to secure them as the hours fly.

The Catholic Church, too, has her tender pathetic tales, at which old and young have mourned for ages, as the history of St. Godeleine can yield proof in this flinty age, when at Wierre-Effroy, a chapter from her legend, read at night prayers, sends all the villagers weeping to their beds. Another guidance is supplied by the incidents related, which often directly point at Catholicity. In the mysteries of Udolpho, youth beholds, and with pleasure, the Convent and the Monk, the Abbess and her sisters of St. Clair; it hears the mattin and the vesper bell, while in the loves of a Valancourt and an Emily it is prepared for appreciating the true histories in the monastic chronicles of the Italian and Spanish convertites. Perhaps even the emotion produced by the records of fictitious sorrow may not prove always vain; for a sense of its being inconsistent with actual cruelty would be something gained,—as when Alexander, tyrant of Phēres, assisting at the Troades of Euripides, left the theatre suddenly, saying he was ashamed to be seen weeping for the misfortunes of Hecuba and Andromache, after having put to death, without pity, such multitudes of men.

But, closing now these books, let us consider the principle of romance in general, as it is developed under the various forms to which a love of the marvellous gives rise. And lo! the road changing its title at those cypress trees, mixed with the dark yew, seems to suggest the order in which we should observe them, from one delusion to another, directing men by a certain congruity of attraction to the truth which their particular error would conceal or contaminate.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROAD OF SPECTRES.

Trees too have their prodigies. See that vast ancient trunk still producing leaves, lately fallen, with such wide ruin, scattering fragments innumerable on the ground. It fell down yesterday, and no one can tell the cause. St. Edmund's oak was thus unaccountably split open, and prostrated this very year; when an arrow was found embedded in the wood, supposed to be one of those with which the martyr was shot to death, as to that tree tradition says he was attached. "There are examples," says Pliny, "of many trees having fallen without a tempest, or any other cause to account for it *." Here, a few steps further, is a dismal spot, dark and lonesome, that would suit well that poet's dialogue, beginning,—

> "Grim reader! did you ever see a ghost?
> No; but you have heard—I understand—be dumb!
> I say I do believe a haunted spot
> Exists—and where? that shall I not recal,
> Because I'd rather it should be forgot.
> Shadows the soul of Richard may appal;
> The dying embers dwindle in the grate,
> I think, too, that I have sate up too late."

Already you perceive that a hand points here to the desecrated monastery, to the plundered shrine, and to the domestic revelations of Spelman, intended to disclose histories of just providence, of which few could say more than has been said; they passed, as such things do, for superstition with some, while others, who had more in dread the theme, half-credited the strange tradition. "During the reign of this Queen Elizabeth, who now rules in England," says d'Averoult in his Historical Catechism, "Francis Belleforest mentions an Earl, who, having changed a monastery into a palace for himself, has been so terrified, during many nights, by spectres of monks and priests, that he has been obliged to abandon the lodging †." On good grounds did that house emit an ill-omened sound —

ἐπ' ἀξίοισι γ' ἆρ' ἀνευφημεῖ δόμος.

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* Lib. xvi. 57.

† Vol. i. 62.

"Hark ! whence that rushing sound ?
'Tis like the wondrous strain
That round a lonely ruin swells,
Which wandering on the echoing shore,
The enthusiast hears at evening."

Come, walk on and let me fright you with my sprites ; I know those who are powerful at it. I have tales of sprites and goblins. We shall have these anon : I will tell them softly ; yon shard-borne beetle, with his drowsy hums, shall not hear them. Come on, then, and take them in thine ear, while now the wolf behowls the moon.

Vague impressions of the supernatural, attached to certain localities, even when they have not an historic and religious character, can recal the Church, which prescribes, and the Catholic, who applies a remedy for them. St. Germain d'Auxerre, one winter's day, in company with four clerks, was returning late, and surprised by nightfall, when still far from the monastery of St. Como, in the neighbourhood of Uvarzy. A thick fog had caused them to lose their way. They came to an old castle of evil fame that had been abandoned by its owners. The apartments were fast falling to ruin, and popular superstition turned aside all visitors. It is certain that some prisoners had been murdered within its walls, since which crime no one had had courage to return to it. The bishop, however, resolved to pass the night there. They then broke their fast with provisions that they carried, lighted a fire, and afterwards, as if in the Episcopal house, read aloud from the holy Scriptures. The bishop then slept ; and so the night past tranquilly. Next morning, the bishop instituted a search under the brushwood, which led to the discovery of two bodies in chains. With his own hands he gave them burial, and thenceforth the people regarded the castle as purified and safe *. The pagan Normans, through superstition, feared, as when arrived at Poissy, to traverse the forests of France, and preferred taking a great circuit to avoid them. The converted had no such apprehensions. Hence a celebrated author—describing a forest of extraordinary wildness, which, owing to its sunless gloom, and almost impassable recesses, as well as to the fear of strange spectres and visionary illusions, to be encountered in it, most people avoided entering, unless in case of extreme necessity—says, "that a certain pious old fisherman used to pass many times through it, because he entertained scarcely any thoughts but such as were religious ; and besides, every time he crossed the evil-reported shades he used to sing some holy song, with a clear voice, and from a sincere heart."

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* Lefevre, hist. de St. Germ. l'Aux.

Tales also of inexplicable noises, no sound that the earth owes, preceding death, refer us to very ancient witnesses, of whom, many even wear the hood of holy cloistered men. The president Fauchet makes mention, from what he has found in contemporary writers, of the strange sounds and cracking of the beams and floors which were heard in the palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, before the death of Charlemagne; as if their divining power, like that of walnut-beams, which, Pliny says, foretell their own approaching fracture by a sound, so that they who heard it in Antandrus rushed in terror from the bath*, extended even to announce the fate of men. The saying used by Calderon, "no louder noise if you heard the bell of Velilla de Ebro," alludes to that in Aragon, which used, it was said, to sound of itself, to announce any great misfortune for Spain. "The bell in Aragon," says Pierre Matthieu, "which used to sound of itself several tolls before any great calamity, emitted so loud a tone that the deepest sleepers would awake. It tolled when the king Alphonso V., of Aragon, went to Naples; again, when the king Don Sebastian lost the battle in Africa; again, when the emperor Charles V. died; and again, when king Philip, his son, being sick at Badajos, lost his queen †."

"The famous gate of the chapel of St. Martin, in the Convent of Mercy, of Saragossa, was celebrated through all Spain, and even Europe. It was in the middle of the cloister. At this gate three knocks used to be distinctly heard through the whole convent, for three days before the death of a monk of the house. When these were heard, every one in the monastery prepared for death, not knowing for whom it was intended, and the result was always the same. Once, when every one was well, on the second day a strange monk came to the house, and on the next day died suddenly. The whole city of Saragossa could bear witness to this miracle, which ended in 1622, when the commander, John Cabero, rebuilt the convent in a magnificent style, and took care to preserve the gate, but the warning power was withdrawn ‡."

Traditions of this kind transfer us again to the monastery of St. Peter de Arlanzo, which was rebuilt by Ferdinand Gonsalez, who loved it so, that, even after death, he chose to rest there, in which are so many ancient sepulchres in the chapter, amongst which is that of Nunnus Velascus, whence the illustrious house of Velascus, constables of Castile, draws its origin; "for it is confidently asserted," says an historian, of the Benedictine order, "and transmitted by many witnesses, that whenever any great battle was to be fought and the state endangered, a great noise

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* Hist. Nat. lib. xvi. 81.

† Hist. de Hen. IV.

‡ Hist. de l'Ordre de Notre Dame de la Mercy, par les rev. pères de la Mercy, 550.

used to be heard in the tomb of Ferdinand Gonsalez, mixed with a kind of warlike tumult. The shaking of his bones seemed to warn his descendants to hasten to save Castille from the Moors, and to follow his example. Not to speak of what took place before the las navas de Toloso, in the year 1456, when the Christians triumphed over Mahomet at Belgrade, the tomb of Ferdinand Gonsalez emitted terrible sounds, and the monks noted the time, which the account afterwards explained. Again. in 1492, before the great war with the Moors of Granada. This last instance was attested on oath by Martin Fernandez de Corral. and Garcia Sanchez, John Alphonso, and Petro de Ferrera, townspeople of Covarruvia, as also by eight others, some of them monks, and others seculars. "I have myself," he adds, "seen those tablets, nor could I detect the least appearance of imposture. The words of David came to my mind, 'Omnia ossa mea dicent, Domine, quis similis tibi*?'"

This inference of the monk is better than the vague impressions of the modern author, who says that "few would like to pass a night in an old church, for the night-wind has a dismal trick of wandering round and round a building of that sort, and moaning as it goes; and of trying, with its unseen hand, the windows and the doors; and seeking out some crevices by which to enter. And when it has got in, as one not finding what it seeks, whatever that may be, it wails and howls to issue forth again; and not content with stalking through the aisles, and gliding round and round the pillars and tempting the deep organ, soars up to the roof, and strives to rend the rafters; then flings itself despairingly upon the stones below, and passes muttering into the vaults. It has an awful voice that wind at midnight, singing in a church." He might add, that it recals the Catholic, who is not dismayed by such sounds, as recently a certain gentleman, shut up in the Cathedral of Perigueux, while wandering in the crypts, and passing the night within the choir, where he tried to sleep, could bear witness by a striking tale; for lo! in the deep hour of night he beheld a figure that entered and knelt before the altar, which proved to be the bishop, who was accustomed secretly to pray there every night, having a private access from his palace. But more again of such sounds, without comment, for by my fay I cannot reason now. The gentiles thought they heard them :—

"Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita silentes
Ingens, et simulacra modis pallentia miris
Visa sub obscurum noctis †."

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* Antonio de Yepes Montserratensis, Chronicon generale ord. S. Ben. tom. i. 398.

† Georg. i. 475.

Lord Byron sings an instance, which, did I give names, might be supposed the same as I have heard attested by one who was the solitary hearer—

> "'Twas midnight—all was slumber; the lone light
> Dimm'd in the lamp, as loath to break the night.
> Hark! There be murmurs heard without the hall;
> A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!
> A long loud shriek—and silence. Did they hear
> That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?
> He heard and came—the place was walled around,"

and no earthly foot trod it. The next day, upon the same ground, a matron of that family dropped suddenly and expired. The stranger, too, has heard that the gardener, who on the night, and at the very hour his sister died, lay near some linen that was spread to bleach on grounds not far distant from the house, was awoke by sounds of an unearthly sweetness, which passed along the midnight air. Emily, in the familiar tale, heard music of this kind in Languedoc the night before her father died. To some families the popular fancy assigned the privilege of a certain supernatural monitor, whose office it was to appear as if mourning to announce the approaching death of one of the members. The mixture at least of error here is distinguishable enough; but in the abbey of Cluny was a monk of great sanctity, named Guillaum d'Auvergne, who one night hearing a voice that wept and sobbed, said, "This voice announces to me that my sister is about to die," and the next day news came of her death *. Is not this something more than fantasy? What think you of it? Robert, bishop of Lincoln, left this world, which he never loved, says Matthieu Paris, at his manor of Bukedon on the night of St. Denis, 1253. That night the Lord Foulques, bishop of London, being in the neighbourhood, heard a strange sound in the air, which he said to those attending him was something superhuman like the toll of a great monastery bell. They heard nothing, but the bishop felt that it was an announcement of death, and hastening to Bukedon, learned that at that moment the bishop of Lincoln had breathed his last. This was told to me by John Crachale, chaplain of the bishop, and a man truly venerable. The same night some minor friars travelling to Bukedon, to the bishop, for he was the father and consoler of both Dominicans and Franciscans, lost their way in crossing the royal forest of Wauberge; and during that time they heard in the air a melodious sound of bells, the toll of one being distinctly heard over the others, which surprised them, as they knew of no great church near.

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* Lorain. Hist. de l'abbaye de Cluny, 213.

At day-break, after having long vainly wandered in the forest, they met some woodmen whom they interrogated respecting the tolling of bells; but they had heard nothing; so the friars proceeded, and on arriving at Bukedon they learned that at the same hour when they heard the bell in the forest the blessed soul of Robert had departed *.

But methinks the deep of night is crept upon our talk, and we have yet to ask what direction can be elicited from such wild narratives. Do they supply any? Perhaps little that is special; but thus much they can, that Catholicity, instead of denying or blindly accepting them, draws us to this general conviction which sound philosophy will never quarrel with—that things may be strange, inexplicable, and yet true. "Omnium rerum sunt quædam in alto secreta, et suo cuique corde pervidenda †." For now, good friends, as you are friends, scholars, and soldiers, let me again assail your ears with records against which only those of sophists will be fortified.

Cardinal Baronius, thirteen years before his death, saw one night in a dream the number LXIX in black letters on the wall of his cell. On awaking he thought that this indicated the age to which he was to attain, and on sleeping again he saw the same number on the wall in white figures much larger, and he was so convinced that this was a mysterious warning that he marked this number in many of his books, as in the beginning and end of the xiith volume of his Annals, which was not completely printed at his death, which, as he had predicted, occurred in his sixty-ninth year, of which eight months had elapsed when he departed ‡.

Pope Innocent III. opened the council of Lateran by an allocution in which he expressed a presentiment of his own approaching death. "With desire have I desired to eat this paschal lamb with you before my passion—that is, before I die. As Christ is my life, and death, my gain, I refuse not to drink the cup of suffering by the will of God, for the defence of the Catholic faith, the deliverance of the Holy Land, and for the liberty of the Church, although my desire was to live in the flesh until the commenced work should be accomplished. Nevertheless, the will of God, and not mine, be done! Therefore I say to you, I desire to eat this paschal lamb with you before my passion." He spoke these words, being in perfect health, and in the vigour of life, but in about eight months after the council he was dead §." Casandra, therefore, may be despised and stigmatised as a frantic wanderer, destined to suffer poverty

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* Ad ann. 1253. † Plin. H. N. xxii. 3.

‡ Jacob de Richebourcq ultima verba, &c.

§ Hurter, Gesch. tom. iii. lib. xx.

and woe *, and yet there remains in the region of Catholicity food to satisfy the mind that believes in the possibility of supernatural admonition.

But let us continue, without exclamations about absurdity, to hear first the impressions, the legend or the history, and then we may attempt to estimate the direction, whatever we think of them, which they supply. The first are found under all diversity of character—whether in Gentile men, like Brutus, accustomed, as Plutarch says, " to sit up late, and, after all the world had retired to rest, to pass the silent hours ever occupied," or in the light-hearted maiden, of whom the poet sings,

" O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song,
That whistles in the wind."

They are not without some power even on the Christian philosopher of an inquiring and sceptical age, like Michael Mercati, whose narrative is memorable. Michael Mercati was melancholy while hearing the lectures of Marsilius Ficinus. The reason was that he doubted. One day, after long disputation respecting the immortability of the soul, they promised mutually that whichever of them should die first, would return, if possible, to inform the other of his state. Some time after, Michael, being very early one morning over his books of philosophy, heard a noise as if of a horseman in the street, that stopped at his gate ; at the same moment he heard a hoarse voice saying, " Mercati, Mercati, it is all true what we said of the soul being immortal." Michael astonished, rose, and opening his casement, perceived a man on a white horse, who repeated the words, pointing to the sky. Mercati hastened down the stairs, but when he reached the door the vision disappeared. Immediately he proceeded to his friend's house in Florence, when he received answer that he had died that morning, at the very hour when the vision had appeared to him. From that moment, abandoning the study of secular arts, he devoted himself wholly to the Christian wisdom, becoming an example of all the graces which belong to that true philosophy †.

In fine, profane annals contain traces of the same impression, as where some historians seek to explain the sudden flight of Maximilian to Trent, on raising the siege of Milan, by the alleged apparition of Charles, duke of Burgundy, and of Leopold of Austria, that awoke the emperor from his sleep, to warn him not to trust the Swiss. Matthieu Paris relates, that in the night

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* Æsch. Agam.

† Cæs. Bar. V. Ann. Eccles. ann. 1411.

which preceded the fatal battle of Mansoura, in which William Long-sword was slain, his mother, the noble lady countess, named Hela, abbess of Lacock, beheld a knight armed cap-a-pie received up to heaven, and recognized the arms painted on his shield: she took not much note of the surprising dream, which however, in course of time, when the news arrived, received its explanation*. "Then," says the historian, "remembering her glorious dream, she joined her palms, dropped on her knees, and cried in a joyful tone to the praise of God, what must have pleased greatly Christ, 'O my Lord Jesus Christ, I give thee thanks for having willed that from the womb of such an unworthy sinner as myself, should issue a son so noble and so holy, that you have deigned to place on his head the crown of a martyr. I hope that with his patronage I shall be the sooner raised to the celestial country.' The messengers who had brought the news, on hearing such words, were filled with astonishment and admiration at the manly fortitude and spiritual jubilation of the lady and the mother." "It is the tradition of the English Franciscans in Douay," says Bishop Challoner, "that when Father Heath was martyred at Tyburn, the first who had the news of it in their convent was his aged father, then a lay brother amongst them, informed by a vision of his son appearing to him." Homer indeed may say, and the Highest voice attests the justice of his words,—

'Αλλ' αὕτη δίκη ἐστὶ βροτῶν, ὅτε κέν τε θάνωσιν,
Οὐ γὰρ ἔτι σάρκας τε καὶ ὀστέα ἶνες ἔχουσιν,
'Αλλὰ τὰ μέν τε πυρὸς, κρατερὸν μένος αἰθομένοιο
Δαμνᾷ, ἐπεί κε πρῶτα λίπῃ λεύκ' ὀστέα θυμὸς,
Ψυχὴ δ' ἠΰτ' ὄνειρος, ἀποπταμένη πεπότηται †.

But through the whole world, too, echoes another poet's words,

"Ah! who the shadowy shapes of death,
Or secrets of the grave can scan?"

Catholicity then attracts men on this wild delusive path by the comprehensiveness and elevation of its views; for while it admits the validity of credible witnesses, it turns to a useful account such narratives which, whether they be received as true or fanciful as to the exact incidents, are made, by means of its commentary, to point at truths which, as faithful guides, will thenceforth take charge of those who are convinced of them to their end. It is a Pagan not a Christian challenge which appeals to experience to deny the fact of apparitions—

Καὶ τίς θανόντων ἦλθεν ἐξ Αΐδου πάλιν ‡;

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* Ad ann. 1250. † Il. xi. 218. ‡ Herc. furens.

It was a Pagan sceptic too who made it; for Plutarch, more in accordance with truth, observes, that reason will not sanction an absolute denial. "If," saith he, "men so grave, so instructed in philosophy as Dion and Brutus, incapable of being surprised or deluded by any passion, have been so powerfully affected by the apparition of a phantom as to make it known to their friends, I question whether we ought not to admit the possibility of this opinion, however strange, which antiquity has transmitted to us; that there are envious and wicked demons who, jealous of good men, oppose their virtuous actions, and endeavour to shake their constancy by fears and troubles, lest these men persevering in virtue should partake after death in a happier life than theirs *." But if the Church subscribes to this judgment of the Chæronean sage, she attracts those whom it might terrify by imparting the secrets of an imperturbable security; and thus enables them to retain their opinion without incurring its pernicious consequences, so that each can merit the praise bestowed on the good Richard, duke of Normandy, who was said to have never felt fear, "na prime, na complie †;" feeling with the poet who alludes to those who hear her in the lines,—

"Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
Can harm them." ————————

It is remarkable that the superstitious fear of spectral apparitions leaves but faint traces if the sun of the Church illuminates a land. It is not in Italy or Spain that narratives respecting them abound. Hermits, alone all night within the woods, have nothing of this kind to relate. In the lives or rules of the solitaries you find no trace of fearing, moody, discontented souls. Let us however inquire what direction can be drawn from the narratives of apparitions recorded by men who are under the influence of the Church: for such can be found. We can with confidence affirm that they point from the hurtful terror of that blind superstition which reigns without her pale, to a cautious and unconcerned hearing of grave witnesses, and to truths respecting the soul, and the duties of living men involved in their evidence, which can lead a candid observer to mark both the future and immediate advantages of faith. The monk in an old mystery, on hearing of an apparition, says, "Je n'y croirai qu'en le voyant;" and Matthieu Paris, relating the vision in 1178, which appeared to Robert at St. Alban's, cites his authority as that of a monk of St. Alban's, Gilbert of Sisseverne, who

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* In Vit. Dion.

† Roman. de Richart.

had heard it from the lips of Robert, who examined into the truth as became a learned and prudent man, and who in fine attested it under penalty of the tremendous judgment. Robert himself had only disclosed it through fear of displeasing God, for in publishing it he feared the ridicule of men *. But let us hear the narratives, and observe the food suitable to minds that love to expatiate in this sphere of ideas with which the Church may be said to attract them; for she has a store of such provisions, some of which cannot be withheld from them, though the rest may sleep in clasped books known only to the curious. She produces early narratives of high sanction, such as that of St. Eugenia appearing in vision to her mother as she prayed in the catacombs, and announcing to her that she had seen her father in the joy of the patriarchs †; and then, of later ages, well accredited, as that of Suso beholding, after their death, his spiritual daughter ‡, Dom Eckardus, the holy brother John Eucrerius Argentinensis, and his own mother of holy memory §. She tells of St. Ignatius of Loyola, at the moment of his death in Rome, early in the morning on the 31st of July, appearing at Bologna to a pious and noble lady named Marguerite Gigli, who was awoke by a sudden gust of violent wind, which shook her room, when opening her eyes she beheld Ignatius encompassed with light. The vision being then related to Father Palmea, who knew nothing of the saint's illness, he noted the day and hour; and some days after they heard of his having expired at that precise moment ||. Again, we are assured that St. Anthony of Padua, at the moment of his death, appeared to the Abbot of Vercelli, whom he greatly loved, who was alone studying in his bedroom, and said, "Lo, Lord Abbot, having left the ass at Padua, I am hastening to our country," and that at the same moment the Abbot was cured of a sore throat which the spectre touched before it vanished. The Abbot thought it was really the man of God living in the flesh, but finding on inquiry that no one had seen him enter the convent, he noted the hour, and afterwards received news of his death having taken place at that moment ¶. In the year 1662, a certain lady besought the prayers of Marina de Escobar for her son, who led a dissolute life, and promised, with sighs and tears, that if she obtained the grace of his conversion, she would furnish means to enable some poor virgin to enter an Augustinian convent, in memory of the

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[*] Ad ann. 1178.

[†] Gerbet, esquisse de Rom. Chrétienne, i. 228.

[‡] H. Susonis, De veritate Dialog.

[§] Susonis vita, c. 8.

[||] Le Père Bartoli, Hist. de St. Ig. liv. iv.

[¶] Vita B. Antonii.

prayers of St. Augustin's mother. The good lady died before she obtained the object of her desire; and some time after, her son was suddenly slain, leaving with all an evil opinion as to his soul's state. A few days afterwards he appeared to Marina as suffering the pains of Purgatory, and on her expressing astonishment to find he was not irrevocably lost, he said, that shortly before his death his mother had appeared to him and exhorted him to amend his life, as he was in danger of death; and that from the moment of hearing her words he had become contrite for his sins, with a firm purpose of amending his life, and that in consequence he had escaped final doom[*]. She relates a different apparition, as follows:—"Two days after the Seigneur Roderic Calderon was beheaded, as I was praying early in the morning, he appeared to me and said, 'God be with you, my mother, and repay you all that you have done for me.' I immediately recognized him, and replied, 'Welcome, soul of God.' Again, after two days he appeared to me again and said, 'Fly me not, creature of God. I come not to occupy or trouble you or withdraw you from your God, but to bring you the good news that your migration will not be much longer delayed, and lo, when the time of your death comes, with others who will come from heaven for you, I too will come.' I felt joy, and cried, 'Blessed be God, and will you indeed come with head separated from your body?' I know not why I said this, but he replied, 'Even so, and lo, you shall see my neck in token adorned with a light of inconceivable splendour.' He left me so, cheered and consoled and grateful[†]."

But, soft; lo, what an apparition comes again, revealed in holy annals! Catherine, daughter of St. Bridget, in her mother's lifetime was praying before the altar of St. John the Evangelist, in St. Peter's church at Rome, when, behold! a foreign lady, clad in white, and wearing a long white veil and a black cloak, approached her hastily and begged of her to pray for the soul of Norica. The Lady Catherine then asked her who she was, and she said that she was from Sweden, and that the wife of Lord Charles, her brother, was dead. On Catherine begging of her to accept hospitality with them, she replied, that she must not tarry, and ended with saying, "Pray for Norica, who has left you a golden wreath for your head," after uttering which words she vanished. Her maids, who stood near, heard the Lady Catherine speaking, but saw not the stranger. Some time after, Ingevaldus Amundzson arrived from Sweden with the news that the Lady Gydha, who was of the noble family of the Noricas, and her brother Charles's wife, had lately died,

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[*] Vit. ven. virg. Marinæ, P. I. lib. v. c. 5.

[†] Ibid. c. 18.

and had left her the golden coronet, the value of which supplied with food herself and her mother, with all their family, for a whole year[*].

But without referring to narratives that have so high a religious sanction, for what is related in such books, though no one need seek for it, when it is found lying in the way is not to be trampled on, we shall perceive that the stories collected in common mediæval works with a view to gratify minds that desire to dwell on ideas of this order, have all more or less a useful signification, to denote the varied and subtle action of Catholicity operating to the salvation of men; though in our age many will think, as a late author says, that "their lessons were uncouth and hard to understand, from cumbrous tale or ludicrous appendage, apt to invite the mocker's sneer, unmindful of the truth that lurked among them." Cæsar of Heisterbach, indeed, concludes his collection of such narratives by expressing a hope, that "the fruit of his labours may be the edification of men[†];" and methinks to his book we might address the compliment of the Roman poet, and say, "I wonder not that Ulysses left the Sirens and their cruel songs, but I should much wonder if he had left Cæsarius relating his tales."

> "Gaudentes pueri circum narrantis ab ore
> Pendebunt, tacitumque bibent virtutis amorem[‡]."

Some few of the ancient monastic records, it is true, seem merely to direct us to a barren wonder and amaze, as in the instance thus related by Dom Gattala:—"Azza, a monk of Mount Cassino, being sent by the Abbot Gyrard into Sardinia, while returning to the monastery was taken by the Saracens, and led captive into Africa, where he died. His body, however, was buried before the altar in a church of St. Mary. But it came to pass, that in the dead silence of the night some Saracens passing by there, under the light of the moon, saw him sitting outside the door, and holding a book in his hand. Astonished, they called other Saracens, saying, 'Hasten hither, lo, we see the priest of the Christians, who died this month, sitting before the church door!' Then others, hearing them, hastened from the city gates, and on their approach the monk rose, passed into the basilica, and was seen no more[§]." Similarly Cæsar of Heisterbach mentions incidents of the same remote or indirect kind of action. "Henry," says he, "who presided over the grange called Hart, one day in May walking solitary in the corn fields ruminating his prayers, found a man standing under a pear tree,

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[*] Vit. B. Catherinæ, c. 10.

[†] Illust. Mir. et Hist. Mem.

[‡] Vanier, Præd. R. ix.

[§] Hist. Cassinensis, Sæc. vii. 381.

which stands by itself alone in that field. He had a long white beard, having a tunic down to his heels, a wide scapular reaching below his knees, and an angelic countenance. Coming near he saluted him, saying, 'Benedicite, frater,' who replied, 'Dominus,' and added, "How does your order please you, brother?' The layman saying well, the other added, 'It ought to please you well, for there is no life of such perfection in the Church of God.' His aspect inspiring great reverence, the brother, to give him occasion of asking something, said, 'Why do you go thus barefooted?' 'Such is our custom,' he replied. 'I beg,' said the monk, 'you will allow me to give you a pair of shoes, and that you will dine with us;' but he refused both, and then, after appointing to meet him another day in the same place, withdrawing a little distance, disappeared. Henry, impressed with great awe, hastened to the monastery and related what had occurred to the Abbot Hermann, who advised him to be cautious, adding, 'All is not true that appears true. When you next see him at a distance, sign yourself, and again when you come near him, and say, Benedicite.' Accordingly he did so, when the other smiled, and said, 'You do right to sign yourself. You have a good Prior, and I love him.' He then spoke of the Lord Abbot Eustach, and Henry, and of what had passed in the conclave *." Another instance he relates thus:—"One night, when the same brother Henry sat before the altar of the infirm, a dead body being carried into the Church, a traveller, I cannot say whether he was a man or an angel, appeared to him, and asked by signs where was the Prior, to whom he replied with signs, he is in the infirmary; when he added by signs, I have known this, he is well there, and then inclining before the same altar, and departing, and doing the same before the three other altars which are in the absis, he entered the choir of the monks, and disappeared †."

In general, however, the old narrative directs us to some opening through which the right main way of Catholicity is found, as the following instances will exemplify. Thus some point to mercy, as when we read that at the moment of her death St. Radegonde appeared in a dream to Domolenus, the agent of the treasury, in a village near Poitiers, praying him to deliver his prisoners, and curing him of a malady from which he had long suffered; and that the next morning he delivered seven captives whom he had held in irons ‡." Others to charity for the souls of the dead, as in this brief narrative of Cæsar of Heisterbach. "A certain noble youth," he says, "came to Clairvaux, and was received as a lay brother, who, not thinking high things,

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* Lib. viii. 96. † viii. c. 96.

‡ De Fleuri, Hist. de S. Rad. p. 264.

but consenting to the humble, was sent to a grange to tend the sheep. One day, as he watched the flock in a field, a companion of his boyhood appeared to him, after death, and charged him to have three masses in the monastery said for his soul*." Others, again, point to a desire of the joys of heaven, as in that instance from the Magnum Speculum, which is related thus :—"There were two knights, great friends, and one said to the other, 'On such a day I shall hold a court ; I pray you to promise me to come to serve at it.' And he replied, 'I also on such another day will hold my court, and I wish you to come to it.' And they both promised : but before the first held his court, the companion died. When the day came, lo! that knight who was dead came to the supper and ministered, and at the end said to his friend, 'Behold! I have kept my word. Fail not to fulfil your promise to me.' 'But are you not dead?' asked the other. 'How can I go to your court?' He replied, 'Next Sunday, on returning from mass, you will find a white horse at your door, saddled, and two white harriers, who will lead you to my court, and escort you back hither. But first go to confession.' The Sunday came : the knight returned from mass, found the horse and the harriers, mounted, and to the voice asking whither he meant to go? replied, 'Wherever God willeth.' Then he followed the harriers through fields, and woods, and deserts, and coming to a grove, he found a hermit's cell, and the harriers stood still. Then the knight, remembering some sins that he had not confessed, alighted, and made his confession to the hermit, and again mounted. Away again they ran, and came to a palace, where they again halted. The knight alighted, and lo! his dead friend came out to meet him, saying, 'You come late : there is but one dish to serve up.' So entering, he found a great and glorious company, and he served the one remaining dish ; and then the dead knight said to him, 'Friend, you must now return to your house;' and he replied, 'For God's sake, permit me to stay in this happy company a short space;' but the other persisted, and added that he had already been there longer than he imagined. So leading him to his horse, the other mounted, and the harriers preceded him, and they came to the place where the hermit had lived, and lo! it was no longer there ; and they came to the neighbourhood where his own house had been, and he saw the woods all cut down, and the place changed. and he was astonished ; and arriving at the site of his former house, he found an abbey in its stead, and when he struck at the gate and said, in reply to the porter, that he was lord of the whole land there, the porter told the abbot, and the abbot came to the gate, and in reply to the knight said, that for two hundred years that

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* Illust. Mir. et Hist. Mem. lib. xii. 33.

abbey had been there; but the knight affirmed that he had only left home that morning; and then an old hooded man advanced and said that he had heard from his grandfather, that a certain lord of that estate had once departed with a certain horse and two harriers, saying he would return the same day. Then the knight concluded that what seemed to him but one hour, was a space of two hundred years—so delightful is the society of God *." Thus, as in the old romances, these heroes having promised, keep their word, though dead, and so point from blissful seats to honour.

Others, again, warn men of perilous obstacles in the way of human life. Thus, to show the danger of avarice, Cæsar of Heisterbach says: "In the monastery of Clairvaux, a certain prior died lately, a religious man, and a lover of discipline. He appeared to a servant of God, Aezellina, exactly as when alive, even to the thin worn cowl he used to wear, and told her that he was in great torment till the next solemnity of our Lady. She, in astonishment, exclaimed, 'We all thought that you were a holy man:' and he answered, 'I am punished for nothing but for having been too careful to increase the possessions of the monastery, deceived by avarice, under the appearance of virtue †.'"

Enforcing the same lesson, he relates another instance thus:—"At the time when Master John Xantensis, the scholastic, and Master Oliver of Cologne, preached the Cross, in the diocese of Utrecht, against the Saracens, there was a certain rustic, named Godeslachus, a great usurer, who took the Cross, not through devotion, but yielding to the importunity of those round him. When the dispensers collected the ransom from the aged, poor, and infirm, this usurer, feigning himself poor, gave about five talents, circumventing the priest; for his neighbours declared afterwards, that without injury to his children, he could have given four hundred marks. This wretch, sitting in a drinking shop, used to ridicule the pilgrims, saying, 'You fools, to pass the sea, spending your substance, and exposing your life, while I for five marks can sit at home with my wife and children and have the same recompense as you.' That very night, while sleeping in his mill, near his house, he heard the sound as of the wheel turning, and calling his boy, he desired him to go out and see who was there. The boy went out, but came back quicker, saying that he felt overwhelmed with such terror that he could not proceed. 'Then will I go,' said the other, 'though it be the demon himself.' On going out he saw a hideous figure, holding two black horses. Being ordered, with a power he could not resist, to mount, he was borne away in despair, and led to the region of the damned, where he saw his father and mother, and

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* Joan. Majoris Magnum Speculum, p. 94.

† xii. 25.

many others whom he knew. He saw a certain respectable knight, lately deceased, Helyas de Riningen, burgrave of the Castle of Hurst, sitting on a furious cow, with his back to its horns, which lacerated him with repeated strokes as it ran hither and thither, the knight replying to the rustic, that he suffered this torment for having seized, without mercy, the cow of a certain widow. Then he saw fiery seats, and he was told to return in three days to occupy one of them, after which he found himself again in his mill, but nearly lifeless. Terrified at his report, his wife sent for a priest, who endeavoured to dispel his horror, and to excite him to contrition for his sins, saying, that no one ought to despair of God's mercy; to whom the other said, 'Of what avail these words? it is useless to confess; I must fulfil my fate. My seat is prepared, and in three days I must occupy it.' And thus on the third day, without contrition, without confession, without the sacraments, he died. The priest was prevailed on by the widow to permit his body being buried in the cemetery, for which he was afterwards fined by the synod of Utrecht. This occurred within the last three years. The penalty of the cow seems well to suit the nobles and advocates of our time, who consume the houses and lands of their subjects by constant exactions, not suffering their substance to grow, as the perpetual grazing of the cow keeps down the grass. These men, for driving others about, will be themselves at last driven, like this knight; while the usurer, for quietly sitting at home in his house, giving his money on usury, will receive a fiery seat in hell *."

Similarly against drunkenness there is a warning by the spectral tale. "In the diocese of Cologne," says Cæsarius, "not far from Cologne, lived a certain knight, called Rudingerus, so given to wine that he used to frequent the dedications of different places for the sole purpose of drinking. After death he appeared to his daughter with a pitcher in his hand, which he told her was filled with pitch and sulphur, and that he was constrained to drink from it continually, and with these words he vanished †."

At the tomb of the Norman bishop, Robert Bluet, at Lincoln, spectres were said to be seen at night, attesting his debaucheries. For the woes of sinners are the lessons always from the silent spot which old tradition has peopled with the spectral dead. In Normandy it was said that lights used to be seen sometimes by night, within churches, and also in forests, indicating that mass was saying by a dead priest, who had neglected in life to fulfil his obligation. The wild huntsman is known in many countries as having been a noble, who, among other evil deeds, used to

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* ii. c. 7.

† Id. xii. 41.

pursue his sport with sacrilegious ardour, regardless of the poor, and of the sanctity of the Sunday. Le Grand Veneur de Fontainebleau, who, as we have already heard, appeared to Henry IV., to warn him of his death, pointed similarly to the sinfulness of the immoderate chace. Sully affirms that he has heard the invisible hounds close to the castle. That penance must be done in this life, or the next, is the lesson from other narratives of the same class.

"Duke Richard Sans-paour, being in his castle of Moulineaux-sur-Seine, went one evening, we are told, to take recreation in the wood after supper, when he and his company heard a horrible noise in among the trees, which came from what was then called la Mesgnie Hennequin, or la Mesgnie Charles Quint, who had been king of France; and the same noise used to be heard thrice a week, à l'heur d'entre chien et leu. This was Charles V., lately dead, doing penance for his sins, with the souls of his knights and others who served him, who, for their sins, perform this penance; and the duke, hearing that all night long they fought with Saracens, declared that he wished to go with them; and so he went with them, and at midnight he heard a bell, and asking what it was, they told him that it was the bell of the abbey of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai; and the Duke Richard, who was always accustomed to go to church, wished to hear matins; and the king told him to go, and that they would return for him; and the duke went, and when he had said his prayers, he went about the church, and saw in it one of his knights and relations, who served in it, having been seven years a prisoner with the Turks, and taken in pledge by the monks there; and he conversed with him, and then the king and his Mesgnie came back for him, and so they returned like a tempest, and at day-break the duke found himself in the wood of Moulineaux, under the same tree, and quite alone; and then he caused a solemn service to be sung for the soul of King Charles*."

But let us observe how the learned are directed by this spectral lore, which for them has its especial lessons. We read that there was, in Paris, a certain master of logic and philosophy named Ser Lo, who had many scholars. One of these, a subtle and desperate arguer, but proud and vicious, died, and one night, soon afterwards, appeared to him, and in reply to his inquiry respecting the fate of his soul, told him that he was damned; being asked as to the intensity of his pains, he said that they exceeded description. "See," he added, "this mantle, filled with sophisms, which clothes me; it sinks me down, it weighs on me heavier than if it were the greatest tower of Paris, or the loftiest

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* Les Chroniques de Normandie, chap. lvii.

mountain in the world, and I shall never be able to put it off. This is the penalty for the vain glory which I cherished from the exercise of subtle argumentation. This mantle, full of sophisms, is thus always before my eyes, to my confusion. Behold, also, the fur lining of this mantle. This is all fiery, and it devours my flesh, to punish its impurities, which I loved to the last, and should have always loved; therefore is my punishment eternal. But now, in order that you, my master, may profit by this vision, stretch out your hand to me;" and he having stretched it out, the scholar shook from his own burning hand a little drop of perspiration, which pierced it through and through, like a sharp arrow. "Now," said the scholar, "you have a specimen of the pains of hell!" and with these words vanished. The master remained with his hand pierced, full of torture. No remedy could be found for it, and the mark was indelible. Full of contrition and fear, the master resolved to abandon the school and the world. With this intention he composed two verses, which he recited to his scholars the next morning, at the same time showing them his pierced hand, and relating the vision. The verses are these:—

"Linquo coax ranis, cras corvis, vanaque vanis;
Ad loycam pergo, quæ mortis non timet ergo."

Thus renouncing logical subtleties and all vain things, he became a monk, and finished holily his days*.

Against ambition too there is a like ghostly warning. "What I am about to relate," says a Dominican, "happened in a convent of our Dominican order at Naples. One night after complin, he who had care of the refectory, entering it, beheld it to his astonishment full of brethren, all with their black cowls on, sitting as if for the collation. He ran to the Prior and told him, who thought him mad, but being pressed to hasten, followed him and beheld the vision. Recoiling, he called the seniors, and by their advice, clad in the sacred vestments, and carrying the eucharist, the whole convent following, returned, and approaching, adjured them to declare who they were and what they wanted. They all rose, inclined their heads, but so slightly threw back their cowls, that their faces could not be seen. Their superior then replied, 'That they were all monks of that order, masters, priors, bachelors, and lectors, and that all were lost and doomed for their ambition, and that they were sent thither to warn that community to remember their vocation;' and then, in proof of their mission, throwing wholly back their cowls, each seemed all on fire with close encircling

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* Passavanti, Specchio della vera Penitenza.

flames. After an instant, the table being struck, they vanished, leaving the whole convent aghast with fear. The memory of which vision," adds the narrator, "is still preserved as by a tradition from our fathers; nor can it be doubted but that it produced most salutary results through the entire order *." The peril of neglecting duty is shown by another narrative. "Bruno was a good priest in a great town of Germany. He had a nephew a priest, who was also a good and learned man. Hence the other prayed him to take charge of his benefice, that he might enter a religious order. After much entreaty he consented, though fearing such a charge; and then Bruno entered a monastery, in which he soon after died. The other, deferring to undertake his charge of the souls because he had another benefice, placed a vicar to supply his placé. One night the elder Bruno appeared to him in a black hood, and said to him, 'In grege commisso male te geris, et pede scisso claudus es; inspicito quæ pœna futura, redito;' then raising his cowl he showed his face all consumed with fire. The priest did not attend to the warning, and then the same figure came again as he slept, and said,

'Tu pœnæ causa, requies per te mihi clausa,
Aspice sic uri, cibus ignis et esca futuri.'

He being still regardless, it came a third time, and said,

'Mundi deliciis interdum seria misce,
Ex his primitiis cape partes, aut resipisce.'

After this, truly contrite, he began to fulfil what he had promised to his uncle living, and so persevered to his death †."

To show that the souls of the dead retain a certain use of their faculties, and that there is communion still between them and those living upon earth, many visions are related. "Let us be content," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "with crediting the numerous and ancient traditions which affirm the truth, and believe the testimony of those legislators who declare it to be so ‡." Thus the dead give warning to men about to die. Let us hear Cæsarius:—"In a town called Leiglinge, about two miles from Cologne, about seven years ago, a certain simple boy, who tended the flocks of a certain matron, had such a love for St. Nicholas, that every day he gave a half of his bread to the poor in his honour. He used to invoke him often in his prayers, so that one day the blessed Pontiff appeared to him in the fields, and

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* Frater Antonius Senensis, in chron. Prædicatorum ad ann. 1380.

† Joan. Majoris Magnum Speculum, 588.

‡ Cæsar II. lib. xi.

said, 'Good boy, drive the flock home;' and he said, 'My lord, it is too early yet, and my lady would be angry;' when he added, 'Do what I say, for you will die this day before the setting of the sun,' and with these words disappeared. The boy went home with the sheep, and when the matron asked him why he had returned so soon, he replied, that he was about to die. 'Are you mad?' she replied; 'go back to the fields;' but he lay down on a bed, and begged them to send for a priest. The priest came, and the matron said to him, 'I fear that this boy has seen something in his fancy, investigate what it means.' The boy revealed his vision, and after receiving the communion from his hands expired *."

Again, let us hear the same narrator:—

"It happened once in the church of Bonn, that, after vespers, when the scholars were playing by twilight in the cloister, they saw from the sepulchre of one of the canons lately buried, a form emerge, which passed along through the other tombs, and then disappeared in another; and soon after a canon died, and was buried in the tomb from which the phantom had come out; and a few days after another canon died, who was buried in the tomb into which it had entered. The monk Christian was present and saw it †."

He has yet another instance:—

"It is not a year since that Lambert, our monk, one Monday night falling asleep in the choir, saw Richwin our cellararius, who had died a few years before, entering the choir, who signed to him with his hand, saying, 'Brother Lambert, come, we will go to the Rhine together.' He knowing that he was dead, made a sign in answer, saying, 'Believe me, I will not go with you.' By whom being thus repulsed, turning to the opposite choir, he called, with a like sign and word, an old monk, Conrad, who had militated in the order about fifty years, who immediately covering his head with a cowl followed him. That day after supper, when the prior had called some of us, and the same Conrad was present, Lambert, in my hearing, said to him, 'Truly, Conrad, you will die soon, for I saw you this night in this cowl, following Richwin,' continuing to relate the whole vision to him;—who replied, 'I care not, I wish to be dead. The next day, if I remember well, he fell sick, and after a short time died, and was buried in the same cowl ‡."

In fine, these apparitions point at the dreadful doom reserved in general for the impenitent. Let us again hear Cæsarius:—

"A certain priest of Spain, last year, near the castle of the Count of Losa, passing at night-fall over a plain, saw a tournament of the dead, who kept shouting out, 'Lord Walter de

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* viii. c. 75.

† Id. xi. c. 64.

‡ xi. c. 33.

Milene, Lord Walter de Milene!' That Walter was a famous knight, lately dead. The priest made a circle round himself, and when the vision ceased he proceeded. Again seeing them, he did the same, and thus laboured till day-light. This was told me by Wiger, a monk of Villers *."

His store is not exhausted. "Last year," saith he, "a certain canon of Aix related to me a terrible vision of a certain Wilhelm, who appeared after his death to a certain recluse, on whom he had conferred benefits, having a lurid and emaciated countenance, saying, 'I am wretched, Wilhelm, once Count of Julien;' and when she asked him about his state, he answered, 'I am all on fire!' and when he had lifted up a vile cloak which he wore, the flames burst from under it, and he vanished with a groan †."

He has another not less terrible.:—

"Some Suabians, returning from Jerusalem, sailing near the Lipari mountains, which vomited flames, heard voices saying, 'Welcome, welcome, our friend Schulter of Kolmer; it is cold, make a good fire for him.' On their return they found that he had died the same day and hour when they heard that cry; and relating it to his widow, she replied, 'If so, then it is right that I should succour him;' and soon after, leaving all things, she proceeded on pilgrimage to various holy places, supplicating God with prayers and alms for his soul. Another time, some Flemings passing the same place heard a similar voice announcing the arrival there of Siward, who was a still worse man than the other, and who in fact had died at that moment. Another time, Conrad, a priest of Rinkassel, passing the sea with other pilgrims of our province, coming near the same mountains, heard a voice crying, 'Here comes Bruno de Flittirt. Receive him!' All heard it and noted down the hour, and the man was found to have then expired. Conrad soon after became a monk in Berge ‡. That Bruno left a son of his name who inherited more vices than riches from him; for, like his father, he was grasping, and an oppressor of the poor. He was butler of the Count of Mons; he died about three months ago, and at the time of his expiring, a person, delivered from a demon, had asked it whence it came, and it replied, 'We had a grand feast at the death of Bruno, whom we led to his place, placing him on his due seat, and presenting him with the proper cup §.'"

But enough of these—"vereor ne hæc forte cuiquam," as Cicero says, "nimis antiqua et jam obsoleta videantur ||," that is to say, obsolete to men of stubborn souls, who apprehend no further than this world, and square their lives according. Let us mark

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* xii. 17. † xii. c. 5. ‡ xii. c. 7—9.

§ xii. c. 10. || In Verr. ii. 1.

other impressions through this wild and dreadful region of the forest, which, if attentively considered, will be found to have a power of guiding right to happy issues, where the great breaches in abused nature, the untuned and jarring senses, are cured and set right by the spectacle of truth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROAD OF SORCERERS.

Now the ground is thick overspread with asphodels, which the ancients used to plant before the gates of their villas as a remedy against witchcraft[*], though here we shall have proof how vainly the moles have here been working; the importance attached to which, blind buried creature, as Pliny remarks, is no small argument of the vanity of those who need it[†]. At this hour, the owl is the chief lord of the desert we are passing, loving as it does not only desolate, but also direful and inaccessible places, monster of the night, vocal not with any songs, but with a shriek. As the shade thickens, bats, which find here no plane trees to keep them off, revolve in circles round us. Only a few steps further we shall come to the old grove of the fairy's mount, the witch's oak, the cave of the sorcerer, and the demon's bridge. Pray you, tread softly, that the blind mole may not hear a foot-fall: we now are near them—

"We must pursue a dreary round,
Till we come to holier ground;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide."

"The patteran or trail of the gypsies," says a traveller, "has more than once been of service to me; this consists of straws left at the junction of four cross roads, strewed by them for the purpose of informing any of their companions who might be straggling behind, the route which they have taken." These indications may lead us to scenes very unlike what those who

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[*] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxi. 68.

[†] Lib. xxx. 7.

gave them thought that they were wending to, when they dropped them thus.

The world cannot be traversed long without hearing somewhat of the sorcerer and his rites; "de circulatoria secta," as Antonio de Escobar calls the magicians who seek to place men in circles to invoke spirits *, perpetuating Medea's prayers, "Ye winds, mountains, rivers, lakes, gods of all the groves, and all the gods of night be present †," and recalling what another poet says,

> "Vidi egomet nigrâ succinctam vadere pallâ
> Canidiam, pedibus nudis, passoque capillo,
> Cum Saganâ majore ululantem ‡."

To such grim figures we are first passing, reader,—

> "Within the navel of this hideous wood,
> Immured in cypress shade a sorcerer dwells,
> And here to every thirsty wanderer
> By sly enticement gives his baneful cup."

Though even Pagans said that this whole seed is wicked and ambitious—

τὸ μαντικὸν πᾶν σπέρμα φιλότιμον κακὸν §,

some men at all times, it is certain, resort willingly to him who is reported to be a great magician, obscured in the circle of this forest. The holy pilgrim from Loretto is described, while taking rest in the top branches of a tree by night, as having had ocular proof of those so often mentioned in old histories, met in foul assembly:—

> "Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side,
> Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
> Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
> Sits arbitress."———

John Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim, gives a catalogue of the magical books existing in his time, all promising great things and full of vanity. There is the book of Stephen Raziel, Claviculæ Salomonis, the Progress by Job of Arabia, the book of Picatrix, of Hermes, of Saturn, of Cyprian, the Ars Calculatoria of Virgil, the book of Simon, of Rupert, the Almadal of Salomon, the Flos Florum, Enoch, the Liber Annulorum, the Speculum Joseph, the Speculum Alexandri Magni, the Liber Secretorum of Hermes the Spaniard, the book of Ungarius Garellus, the book of Michael Scot—beginning, "Si volueris per spiritum habere," in

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* In Evang. Com. Paneg. vol. vii. 165.

† Met. vii. 5. ‡ Hor. Sat. i. 8. § Iph. in Aul. 520.

which is promised with the devil teaching the science of all things—the book of Albert, of Peter of Apono, the book entitled Schemhamphoras, and many others*. These titles seem partly to explain the opinion which, in the middle ages, ascribed the practice of magic eminently to the Jews. Matthieu Paris relates, that Jews were forbidden to appear at the coronation of Richard I., chiefly through fear of their artifices of this kind+. And in fact, so late as the time of St. Pius V., they were reported to be the chief promoters of the superstition of horoscopes, as well as of immorality in Christian families ‡. "It was said that the Duc de Biron had some belief in astrology, as taught in the famous book which is kept so carefully in the library of the Escurial;" such are the words of Pierre Matthieu §. "And now, at this spot, I will unclasp a secret book, and, to your quick conceiving, I'll read you matter deep and dangerous." What must be the fear of ignorant men without divine faith, conversing on this dark road with the wizard, who would defy any that is but woman's son to trace him in the tedious ways of art, and to hold him pace in deep experiments, when the words of those who would counteract him like Trithemius, teaching the conjurations of the evil spirits in the consecration of the bath to be used by the afflicted, and the solemn prayers accompanying it cannot be read by persons wide awake without a certain dread and shuddering? Some demons, they say, infest woods and groves, and lay snares for hunters; others the fields, and cause travellers by night to lose their way; and others, the most dangerous of all, lie in caverns and mines, and in dark subterraneous chambers, guarding treasures and shaking the foundations of houses ||. To these things we find strange allusions. Of an ancient Cistercian monastery of Sittichenbach in Thuringia, we read, "Many spectres are seen and heard in this cloister. Between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day, a whole procession of false monks was seen to issue from a certain cell, to move in order for a certain space, and then to return to the same cell and disappear. Similarly at midnight, in the outward court of the monastery, spectres and sounds were seen and heard, as if the whole court was filled with horsemen. I myself," adds the narrator, "twenty years ago, have seen certain stones among the buildings which seemed to attest the presence of a hidden treasure ¶." The very elements are thought to give testimony to the powers of darkness.

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* Trithem. Antipalus Maleficiorum lib. i.

+ Ad ann. 1189.

‡ De Falloux, Hist. de St. Pie V., i. 107.

§ Hist. de Hen. IV.

|| Trithem. lib. octo, Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

¶ De Cœnob. Sittich. Brevis Hist. in Thuringia Sacra, 734.

as in the lines, "The night was unruly—where we lay, our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say, lamentings heard in the air, strange screams of death." Romance has familiarized many with the sorcerer and the witch—

> ——— "a strange and awful tale
> That woman told me, like such mysterious dream,
> As makes the slumberer's cheek with wonder pale."

Ancient writers have collected many narratives respecting the service proffered by demons to those who would invoke them. Frederic, duke of Austria, being conquered in battle by Louis of Bavaria, and made prisoner, saw a strange pilgrim enter his prison, who invited him to descend with him and mount a horse that waited in the castle court below, saying, that he was charged to escort him to his brother in Austria. Frederic, asking him who he was, the other replied, that he must not ask him any question, but only signify his consent. The duke then, seized with terror, suspecting that it was a demon, signed himself, and the spectre vanished. His brother Leopold was said to have obtained this messenger for him by aid of a magician*. Cæsar, of Heisterbach, supplies another instance, "A demon, under the form of a youth, came to a certain knight, offering to be his servant, who, being pleased with his air and conversation, received him, who soon testified such diligence, and fear, and faithfulness, and cheerfulness, that it was wonderful to observe. He never mounted his horse or alighted, but the lad was ready with a bent knee to hold the stirrup. One day, as they rode together and came to a great river, the knight, espying many of his mortal enemies coming after him, said to him, 'We are dead men. We cannot cross the river, and I shall be slain or captured;' then he, 'Fear not, my lord; I know a ford; only follow me, and we shall escape.' 'Never man yet has forded this river,' replied the knight, who however, in despair of safety, dashed in after him, and they both reached the opposite shore in safety. The enemy, baffled and astonished, rode back in terror, saying, 'The demon must have come to his aid.' In process of time the knight's wife fell sick, and being despaired of by the physicians, the demon said again to his lord, 'If my lady were anointed with lion's milk, she would recover.' 'But how should we get it?' asked the knight. 'I will procure it,' replied the page, and after an hour's absence he returned with a vessel, from which being anointed she recovered. 'Where did you get it?' asked the knight. 'From the mountains of Arabia.' 'Who are you?' asked the knight. 'Do not trouble yourself about that, I am your servant.

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* Ant. d'Avérqult, Catéchisme Historial, i. 276.

The knight insisting, he acknowledged that he was a demon. 'How then do you come to serve a man so faithfully?' 'It is a consolation to me,' he replied, 'to be with the sons of men.' 'Well, I dare not keep you longer in my service, I dare not; but whatever wages you ask, though it be the half of my goods, I'll give it to you, for no one ever served a man so well.' 'I ask nothing but five solidi,' said the demon, who on receiving returned them to the knight, saying, 'Purchase a bell for the roof of that poor church, to call the people together at least on Sundays,' and with these words he disappeared *." We have observed the impressions, but how many steps already lost in this enchanted forest! Here's a maze trod, indeed, through forth-rights and meanders! Stopping to rest me under the shade of these immense oaks, looking pensively around, I see how perilous is my course—

——————— " o'er mine eyes
Confusion hangs, and on my thoughts amaze."

Where is the hand that points here to the beauteous majesty of truth? If we collect ourselves a moment, we shall discover it. In the first place it is well remarked by a recent author, "All these superstitions can lead to truth, since they have a true foundation in the supernatural order of faith. Christianity recognises the apparition of Samuel, the magicians of Pharaoh, and the power of demons in acts of possession. There can be a league with demons, 'Quis hoc credat, nisi sit pro teste vetustas?' But that is much. History, represented by the gravest writers, records events analogous, while all the greatest and loftiest intelligences proclaim their sympathy with the popular sentiment. Superstition over the face of the globe has for product the idea that God exists—that there are good and evil angels—that there is a future life—that there is a communication between the interior and exterior world—that the human will may be fortified by fasts, silence, and mortification—that an expiatory sacrifice is necessary—that there is an elevation or reintegration for which man is destined; and therefore the last term of superstition is the knowledge of God †." Doubtless this is as strange a maze as e'er men trod; but there is in this business more than nature was ever conduct of. Yes, "horrible things have been in this wild world. Prodigious mixtures and confusions strange of good and ill; and worse have been conceived than ever there was found a heart to do." The commentaries of Democritus, extant when Pliny wrote, show however the extent of wicked courage. There the blood of infants and

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* v. c. 36.

† Etudes sur les idées, &c., i. 100.

the very bones of men are ordered to be taken in certain cases; some say those from the head of a wicked man are best—others, those from the skull of a friend or of a guest*. The Catholic Church has its holy exorcisms; and those who seek the testimony of history rather may consult the very ancient manuscripts containing conjurations to expel demons, and deliver men from all demoniacal influence and the maladies arising from them, which are found, as Trithemius says, in ancient monasteries†. "Some men affected with spasms wear metal rings round the heart-finger," says the abbot of Spanheim, "and this is a vain superstition, though I cannot deny that I have seen some cured by that vanity‡." Some would now contest the reality of all the objects seen along this path, to whom a poet says,—

"Have we that scorn the supernatural side
Of witchcraft and enchantment, not retain'd
The devilish part thereof? Is avarice
As well as sorcery amid the appalling list
Of fleshly lusts, or no§?" ———

Nero thought he recognised the falsehood of magic. "Immense and undoubted example," says Pliny, "of its falsehood that Nero abandoned it: but I wish he had consulted the infernal or any other gods respecting his suspicions, rather than have committed them to the impure associates with whom he lived. There were no rites of sorcery, however wild and barbarous, that were not milder than his thoughts‖." Some such men are now in the midst of us, despising diabolic rites, but filling the world more cruelly with shades; and where others inoffensive stand to that absolute denial, those who respect the sacred text must know that they are on the brink of a precipice where they may fall to reprobation. Passing by these fool-hardy and inconsistent sceptics, we are drawn on by observing the corroboration which history furnishes to what the Catholic Church lays down; for all antiquity attests the existence of demoniacal action in the world, however we may wish to protest, and the facts of the appearances which denote it, to which Baptist, the Mantuan, alludes in addressing St. Anthony—

"Te memorant non cum Lapythis, quæ gloria parvis est,
Non cum Centauris; sed quod mirabile multo
Amplius est, cum tartareis Belialibus olim
Decertasse, ipso stante ad spectacula Christo¶."

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* Plin. N. H. lib. xxviii. 2.

† Trithem. Antipalus Maleficiorum lib. iii.

‡ Lib. octo, Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

§ Morris.

‖ Nat. H. xxx. 5.

¶ Bapt. Mant. de sacris diebus Jun.

My philosopher however must be previously requested not to identify this conviction with full credence in the exact truth of all the narratives which may be found in ancient books; some of which, notwithstanding the danger of incurring his reproaches, I must venture to relate; for they are at all events singular and far more amusing than his lucubrations. Let us hear William of Newbury: "Ketellus, a rustic of singular innocence in our province of York, after an accident in youth, has had ever since a wondrous faculty of discerning demons. He said that there were some demons, little and weak and contemptible and stupid, which rejoiced in troubling men: he could see them sitting by the way, and laughing as they watched men falling over obstacles which they had placed. He said, that in a certain drinking-house he saw these demons like apes, sitting on the shoulders of each drinker and spitting into his glass, laughing at them with ludicrous gestures *."

"All diabolic rites," says a recent author, "are concerned with something deformed or disgusting †." The ancients had the same impression; and how firmly they credited these visions of the evil demon every learned reader knows. One evening at twilight, when Dion was seated alone in a portico of his house, abandoned to reflections, he heard suddenly a noise at the other end; and looking up he saw a woman of great stature, resembling one of the Furies on the stage, who was sweeping his house. He called his friends, related the vision, and prayed them to pass the night with him, lest it should again appear to him alone ‡. Cassius Parmensis, who had followed Mark Anthony, after Actium, fled to Athens, and there, shortly before his death, one night as he lay sleepless on his bed, an immense man black and squalid appeared to him, and being asked his name, replied, *κακοδαίμονα*. Terrified, he shouted for his servants; but they had seen no one enter. The same night the spectre appeared to him again; and then he called for lights, and ordered his servants to remain with him till the morning §. It is not therefore only in monastic legends that we meet with attestations of the demoniac vision. But let us consider how adepts in the mystic arts, which place men in communication with the powers of darkness, can be led by the very path they follow to the true light which they would gladly turn from and reject. We meet with early proof that the will alone can be wanting to them. Collius, no incautious guide, treating on the ten sibyls who lived in so remote an antiquity that they are spoken of by Hermes Trismegistus, authors of those books of which

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* Guiliel. Neubrig. Rer. Angl. lib. ii. c. 21.

† Etudes sur les idées, &c. ii. 100.

‡ Plutarch de vit. Dion.

§ Val. Max. i.

Dionysius Halicarnassus says, "The Romans guarded nothing with such religious reverence," concludes that there was not wanting to them the knowledge of faith necessary to salvation[*]. Balaam, he observes, was not in impenetrable darkness lost when he uttered that great prophecy—"Orietur stella ex Jacob." Some of the Fathers, as St. Ignatius the martyr, believed that the magi were really magicians, a class widely spread through the East, some of whom were employed by the Saracens in defending Jerusalem against the crusaders[†]; and St. Chrysostom says, that God, wishing the salvation of deceivers, suffered the magi to be led by that very art of astrology which they had followed. St. Augustin also regards them as magicians, addicted to pestilent superstitions[‡]; to which opinion St. Basil, Theophylact, St. Isidore, and St. Thomas of Aquin[§], subscribe; though others, as St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Jerome, Rupert, and Paschasius Radbert, consider them to have been only lovers of wisdom[||]. The Church, however, has always held as certain the eternal salvation of the magi[¶]. Nor are instances wanting of others being supernaturally led along the dark path of magic to the truth. St. Cyprian the martyr, having been a magician, and hearing from the demon that none of his arts could avail against those who truly worshipped Christ, began vehemently to grieve at the institution of his former life; and so relinquishing magic, converted himself wholly to the faith of Christ[**]. Even the votaries of superstitions at the present day admit the inability of magic in the presence of faith; though still persisting, as if to verify what Trithemius says,—"credunt ludificationibus diaboli, qui credere contemnunt veris miraculis Dei[††]." To show that faith destroys all evil privilege, as I have heard those skilled in spirits say, an instance is thus given in the Magnum Speculum:—The venerable Boniface, Bishop of Lausanne, in my presence, says Thomas Cantepratensis, made mention of a certain blind man who used to lead all the cattle of the village to pasture, and who could always distinguish the best spots and the colour of each cow; he could always catch any one of them instantly, and lead it by the horns to the owner. A certain bishop coming, and asking if he had been confirmed, he said never; then he consenting, and being confirmed, all that power of distinguishing left him, which induced many to suppose that

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[*] Collii de animabus Paganorum, pars ii. lib. iii. c. 24.

[†] Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1099.

[‡] Serm. v. de Epiph. et tom. x. serm. ii. in Ep.

[§] iii. P. Q. 36. a. 3.

[||] Collius, ii. 11. c. 5.

[¶] id. ii. 111. c. 20.

[**] 26th of Sept.

[††] lib. octo, quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

it had been by the operation of the demon*. Far from happiness and peace does this horrid path lead the ignorant who persist in following it. The voice of adepts holding ghastly talk in darkness, is like that which Dante heard among those to misery doomed,—

> "But that thou mayst not joy to see me thus,
> Open thine ears, and hear what I forbode;
> This will I tell, that grief may rend thy heart†."

This dread and sadness point to the Catholic Church as to the source of deliverance from both, perennial fountain of all true pleasure, at which whosoever drinks becomes for bravery like that Alcasto of the poet, "whom nothing," as he said, "could stop, though the place be the mouth of hell." For who are the men that succumb?—

> "Oh! 'tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes between
> The pass and fell incensed points of mighty opposites."

Let us hear Trithemius. "The first class of men who are most easily injured by magicians and witches are those who, despising the sacraments and keys of the Church, persevere in mortal sin without penance, on whom the demon, by God's permission, gains power‡. Therefore, whoever desires to be kept safe from the injuries of demons, must guard his conscience from all sin, especially mortal; must maintain inviolable purity in faith, and firmly believe what the holy Church proposes to us, and have a profound reverence for the sacraments of the Church, and at the same time for all things blessed by the hand of priests. He must receive reverently blessed candles at Candlemas, and palms of Easter, and herbs of the Assumption, and he should have the sign of the cross over the doors of his house, and of his chambers, and of the stables of his flocks. He must have holy water in his house, in his chambers, and in his stables; and with the palms and herbs he should sprinkle his whole house in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, on the Fridays and Saturdays of the four Ember weeks. Experience proves that magic and diabolic art can never affect a man who has heard a whole mass the same day with devotion, till the end of the Gospel of St. John. St. Chrysostom says, that no one should leave his house in the morning without first saying, "Abrenuncio tibi, Sathana, et conjungor tibi, Christe." Let these words, with the sign of the cross on your forehead, be your armour and your staff, and then the demon can never injure you.

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* Joan. Majoris Magnum Speculum, 138. † i. 24.
‡ Antipalus Maleficiorum lib. ii.

As none of you would wish to go into the forum naked and barefooted, so let no one go out without having used these words; and it would be well also if children were to wear round their necks the beginning of the Gospel of St. John *. Trithemius proceeds to say, that pilgrimages to holy places, to implore the suffrages of the saints, are also to be used to deliver men from demoniacal influence. "Sunt enim maleficiorum quædam genera, quæ sine longa peregrinatione et diuturna non facile curantur †." Pilgrimages had been substituted for other works of canonical penance; wherefore "if aught of new to thee appears in this, it needs not bring up wonder in thy looks." The Catholic religion attracts such victims also by the deliverance which it proclaims from magic arts through the power of guardian angels. "When a boy," says John of Salisbury, "I was sent to a priest to learn the Psalms. He practised magic, and he employed me and another boy bigger than myself, sitting at his feet in these sacrilegious exercises, to discover the things he was searching for, from nails anointed with I know not what oil or sacred chrism, or from cleaned skins. When, therefore, by names and adjurations which, though a little boy, I held in horror, my companion said that he saw certain nebulous images, I remained so blind that I saw nothing but the nail and the skin, which I knew before; therefore, being judged useless for such things, I was condemned as impure, not to assist at them in future. Thus, in that early age, God was propitious to me;" "which deliverance," as Delrius says, "is to be ascribed to the guardian angel ‡." Another instance is thus given in the Magnum Speculum:—"A demon, envying a certain holy bishop, sought to seduce him, coming to his palace in the form of a penitent whom he admitted to his table. During dinner a stranger arrived, who with great clamour demanded to be admitted. The false penitent advised that some hard question should be proposed, and that if he could solve it he should be admitted, and not otherwise. Being invited by all the guests to propose the question, the false penitent said, Ask him, then, what is the greatest miracle that God has ever wrought in a small thing? 'The diversity and excellence of countenances,' replied the stranger. All agreed that it was the best answer possible. 'Ask him again,' said the false guest, 'where the earth is higher than the heavens?' 'In the Empyreal heavens, where resides the body of Christ,' replied the stranger; 'for his body being composed like ours, where He is, earth is higher than heaven.' 'Ask him again,' said the restless impostor, 'what

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* Ad pop. Antioch. † Antipalus Malefic. lib. ii., lib. iv.

‡ lib. ii. Polycrat. ii. De la Cerda, De excellentia Cœlestium Spirituum, c. 41.

distance separates earth from heaven?' 'Go back to him who sent you to the gate with this question,' replied the stranger, 'and propose the same to him; for he knows better than I know it, since he has measured that space when he fell.' Trembling and astonished the man returned to the hall, and while delivering the answer the demon vanished. The stranger, being then sought, had disappeared, and the bishop, thus recalled to himself, proclaimed a fast, and related to the people the whole history of his danger and deliverance*."

"Whoever recals his neighbour from sin is an angel," says St. Gregory. A remarkable instance of deliverance by such ministry has occurred while we are treading this path of evil art. In a village near Paris, where the inhabitants were noted for impiety, a certain sorcerer dwelt, who previous to the last drawing for the conscription induced the eligible youth to practise with him and forswear Christ and the blessed Virgin, for which he promised them a good number. One young man refused, and he was drawn. Great was the triumph of the sorcerer and his dupes. A holy nun hearing of the event hastened to Paris, and received from the Duchess of Narbonne the sum needful for a substitute. The youth could then remain; but detracting tales, in consequence of the favour shown to him, so wrought on his affianced bride, that she recalled her promise. Again the nun repaired to the duchess, who, sending for the parents of the betrothed, revealed the whole history. Then the venerable duchess proceeded in state to the village, and the marriage was celebrated with great solemnity in her presence, to the astonishment of the rustics, and the conversion of many, both young and old, to the faith, which many had long either formally or practically renounced.

But to return to the ancient examples. "As I grew up," says John of Salisbury, after relating his early connexion with the magician, "I held this art more and more in horror, and I was strengthened in this sentiment by remarking that all who practised it ended ill, either by natural malady or hostile hand, or in blindness; I say all, with the exception of two, a priest and a deacon, who seeing the result fled, the one into a Church of Canons, the other to Cluny †." As to the future consequences one narrative from Cæsar of Heisterbach will suffice:—"Two youths at Toledo studied necromancy. One of them fell sick to death, and promised to the other that he would appear to him after his decease. So he died. Now it happened that the other was sitting one day in a church before an image of the

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* 292.

† Lib. ii. Polycrat. ii. De la Cerda, De excellentia Cœlestium Spirituum, c. 41.

blessed Virgin, and reading the Psalms for his soul, when the other appeared, and with miserable groans intimated its eternal doom in consequence of having pursued that science. I have read this in the book of the visions of Clairvaux. The youth renounced necromancy, and became a monk in the Cistercian order *." In fine, a sense of the folly or wickedness of such arts points to the Catholic Church as having ever taught men to hold such serious vanity in contempt or abhorrence, so that in most instances the effect of hearing her is to produce the phenomena described by the Italian poet, when Rinaldo struck the enchantress in the form of the giant, and every horror disappeared, the sky becoming cloudless, the forest neither terrible nor beautiful, but heavy and sombre, as of old—a natural gloomy wood, but no prodigy.

Without consulting the decrees of Councils, the tenor of which every one who has ever seen them will be ready to admit, let us hear some narratives, which exhibit in action the consequences of these decrees. "There was a certain priest of Cologne," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, "of good fame, and not moderately learned in the Christian doctrine. He had a nephew, a layman and unlearned, whom he tenderly loved, and who had extorted from a certain comrade a charmed paper, with nefarious words on it, by means of which he said he could without keys pass through any locked and barred doors. Much admiring the power of the charm, he told all to the priest, who suspected that it was done not by the force of the words, but of the malice of the demon ; so on examining the schedule he found inscribed on it—'Joannes,' for such was the man's name, 'est malus nequam, nihil plus, nihil minus, nihil aliter ;' so concealing his mind, he said to the youth, 'These are not holy words. How can you suppose that these words,' repeating them to him, 'can have any power?' The youth began to doubt their efficacy, and on trying the charm, found it could no longer work, for he had lost faith in them ; so casting the cursed schedule into the fire, he renounced all forbidden arts in future †." William of Newbury supplies another instance in the following words :—"A certain knight is said to have gone to Eudo de Stella, a deceiver in France, who had intercourse with the demon, and to have admonished him to renounce such wickedness and his sect which he had formed. But the cunning man displayed before him abundant riches, and told him to take what he would as his good neighbour, for he lived near him. The wise knight however reproached him, and went out. His squire nevertheless, struck with the beauty of a hawk, desired to have it, which he obtained from the wizard and with it followed after his master, who on seeing it charged him

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* i. c. 33.

† Joan. Maj. Magnum Spec. 365.

to have nothing to do with it. The squire however persisting, the hawk confirmed his master's assurance by vanishing in the air *." A third narrative shows the action on a mind that was but simple and ignorant. "The Lady Lupa, of Linhares in Portugal, who for thirteen years had a demon for chamberlain, by whose instigation she exercised a tyranny over her subjects, having however never formally denied the faith, or ceased to revere St. Francis and St. Anthony, being in a state of despair at her death, thinking her salvation hopeless, was moved by a vision of two minor friars entering her room, to make her confession, and on their assurance that the merits of Christ would secure her eternal life, she departed in great peace and in true contrition †." In fine so strong and secure in possessing superior power and authority did men docile to the Church at all times feel themselves, that they were permitted to retain the very books of evil art, which Pagan emperors made it death to keep. "Albert the Great," says Trithemius, "thought, saving a wiser judgment, that the books of necromancy ought rather to be preserved than destroyed; for, with prudence in using them, there might be occasion when it would be well to inspect them. With whom I agree, in order that the professors of diabolical art may be convicted from their own books." He recommends, however, that they be kept secretly in monasteries under a diligent guardian ‡. Pliny, after observing how Britain was so addicted to magic ceremonies, that it might be said to have given itself up to the Persians; and how the whole world was agreed in practising them, though discordant and unconscious of its consent, concludes with words that in Christian ages acquire double force; for he says, "Nec satis æstimari potest quantum Romanis debeatur, qui sustulere monstra, in quibus hominem occidere religiosissimum erat, mandi vero etiam saluberrimum §." But we are not yet clear of the enchanted part of life's forest; for now a dense fog comes over this miserable path as we overtake those who, with nearly all heretics, worship what they deem the occult powers of nature, in which fond belief the gentile world was so blind and lost. No one here seems to hold his footing firm; but all travel "with closed eyes and tottering gait, like a man by wine or sleep overcharged." What mutterings are here! from those who would pluck the herbs "that Ossa bore, and lofty Pelion, Othrys, and Pindus, and Olympus greater still than Pindus." The wizards still follow their old ways,—

> "Miscueruntque herbas, et non innoxia verba ‖."

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* Guiliel. Neubrigens. Rer. Anglic. lib. i. c. 19.

† Vita B. Antonii de Padua.

‡ Trith. Antipalus Maleficiorum lib. 1.

§ xxx. 4.

‖ Georg. iii. 282.

O who can tell, their dupes exclaim—

> "The hidden power of herbs, and might of magic spell [*]!"

They have heard great promises—

> "Si modo me novi, si non evanuit omnis
> Herbarum virtus, nec me mea carmina fallunt [†]."

They have collected herbs on rivers' banks before sunrise, so that no one should see them gathering them [‡]. All those that Pythagoras, Democritus, and the Magi prized, are in their treasures; the piony which moves the gods, the adamanteda which subdues lions, the thalassegle which aids visions, the theangelis which gives divining power, the anacamseros which recals love. They have seen Circe's rite not without direction to wiser eyes,—

> "Ter juvenem baculo tetigit, tria carmina dixit [§]."

They still need the remedy to which their superstitious proverb points, "after employing all the herbs of the eve of St. John." Some are teaching how to make Spanish gold, which, say they, is made of red copper, powder of the basilisk, human blood, and vinegar. The Gentiles, whose ability in this art, they add, is probable, create basilisks by taking two old fowls of twelve or fifteen years and feeding them well, and giving their eggs to toads to hatch, till they produce chickens which acquire tails of serpents. Then the chickens being burnt and pulverized, the dust mixed with the blood of a red-haired man and vinegar, form a paste which is laid on copper plates, and this being fused forms the Spanish gold [||]. But, maugre these pretensions, Raymond Lully says, that the purses of the alchemists are generally empty, and that their clothes are so worn as to indicate the decay of their fortune [¶]. Omens too affright men on this path. "When the guests of Media were slain," says Pliny, "all the ravens flew from the Peloponnesian and Attic land. Pessima eorum significatio, cum glutiunt vocem velut strangulati [**]." The woodpecker in the hollow tree can startle them. "One of these birds," says the same naturalist, "alighted on the head of the urban prætor, Ælius Tubero, while rendering justice in the forum. It sat so quietly that it could be caught with the hand. The soothsayer said, that if suffered to fly away, it boded destruc-

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[*] Spenser.
[†] Ovid, Met. xiv. 8.
[‡] Plin. N. H. xxiv. 107.
[§] xiv. 8.
[||] Theophili Diversarum Artium Schedula, lib. iii. c. 47.
[¶] De Vernon, Vie du b. Raymond Lulle, 173.
[**] Nat. Hist. x. 15.

tion to the empire; if killed, to the prætor. Immediately the latter crushed the bird, and soon after verified the omen[*]." Warnings, too, we hear, like those of Nuño Salido, in the wood of pines, crying out to the seven infants of Lara, "Return, infants, to Salas your castle. Pass not on, for there are evil omens. An owl carried off by an eagle utters screams, and the crows caw wailful notes. As for me, I will not advance another step[†]." So cried the Pagan too,—

> "Fœdaque—volucris, venturi nuncia luctus,
> Ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen[‡]."

But what does not become source of augury to the unwise? Some try Babylonian numbers[§]; others think that their horse, like that of Achilles, has foresight of their fate, and by some action warns them with such words as, "I could save you," only it is written—

> 'Αλλά τοι ἐγγύθεν ἦμαρ ὀλέθριον[‖].

Others wear amulets, and those shrewd men too, like Louis XI., though the traditions otherwise not improbable, respecting the little images round his hat, were first collected by his enemy Seyssel, and by a Gascon tale-teller, Brantome[¶]. Some appeal to history: "a bard of Ireland predicted Richard's death." William Rufus, the night before he was slain, was beheld in a dream by a foreign monk, who saw him entering a church with a proud disdainful air, seizing the crucifix with his teeth, biting the arm, and nearly breaking the legs, till at length falling back upon the pavement, flames and smoke burst from his mouth; which dream being mentioned to him, he exclaimed, "Monk's dream, monk's dream;" though a bishop counselled him to cease from persecuting the Church, and to refrain that day at least from hunting[**]. Others will affirm that there are places of evil fortune, and that kings grow pale at the local tradition. Matthieu Paris says, that Henry III. was the first king of England who dared to visit in person the tomb of St. Fredeswithe in Oxford, his predecessors being swayed by the superstitious opinion of those who thought that an ancient vengeance would visit them on entering that city[††]. King Stephen, indeed, was crowned in Lincoln, despising, as William of Newbury says, "with noble good sense, the old superstition which forbade such a ceremony within the walls of that city; but Henry II., on the contrary,

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[*] x. 20.

[†] Damas Hinard, Romancero general. x.

[‡] Met. v. 14.

[§] Hor. Carm. i. 10.

[‖] xix. 409.

[¶] Michelet, Hist. de France, vi. 491.

[**] Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1100.

[††] Ad ann. 1264.

was crowned without the walls in the suburbs,—I believe," he adds, "on account of that ancient superstition which King Stephen laudably despised and derided *." Others take account of days, and try to justify their opinion by a reference to the power of Tuesday in the life of St. Thomas of Canterbury, who was born, accused, banished, divinely strengthened, restored to his see, martyred, and translated on that day †. Others fly to an oriental belief in fairies, which the monks from England had long ago expelled; and which, a recent author admits, the Spaniards rejected with abhorrence as so essentially Moorish, that they feared to irritate the saints who assisted them against the Pagans by admitting any of their errors ‡.

But not to dwell longer here, let us mark the directions which are provided even in this thickest gloom. All torment, trouble, wonder, and amazement inhabit here. Some heavenly power guide us out of this fearful country! Superstition points to the Catholic Church as to its sole efficacious antagonist, which has the mission to combat it in every form. "Do you ask me," says a French poet, "why an obscure dream seems to agitate my days, why I rise before the dawn, even before the birds; and again, after dusk, why I walk down into the valley, contemplating, one time the herbs, and at another the stars? I reply that I carry an enemy within myself—doubt, blear-eyed and deaf spectre, which only shows things by halves; a wish to deny near, a wish to believe, and a spirit that giggles near a heart that weeps. Hence you see me often whispering, and like a hungry beggar in a reverie seated near a shut gate, seeming to wait for some one to open. Doubts, funereal word, which methinks I see written everywhere, the besetting ill of us children of the passions, whose spirit is never calm, superstitions, those hideous vipers, swarm round our foreheads, where every good bud is withered. We carry in our hearts the putrid carcase of the religion which lived in our fathers; that is why I walk so sad and thoughtful, watching, and hearkening alone, and wandering without a guide as you see me thus." Superstition, is, therefore, favoured by whatever opposes faith. Accordingly, Laurence Humphrey, in Queen Elizabeth's days, in his Optimates, or Treatise on Nobility, observes, "that the superstition of astrology, was, above all other arts, so snatched at, so beloved, and ever devoured by most persons of honour and worship," meaning the patrons of the false reform, who denoted most that they needed no excitement to it, but rather a bridle; "that many," he says "had so trusted in it, that they almost distrusted God."

"In very deed," as a great English writer says, "the super-

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* Guiliel. Neub. Rer. Angl. lib. i. 9. † Matt. Paris, 1169.

‡ Damas Hinard, Romancero general. Discours. Prel. xxiv.

stitious man is, by his good-will, an atheist; but being scared from thence by the pangs and gripes of a boiling conscience, all in a pudder shuffles up to himself such a God and such a worship as is most agreeable to remedy his fear; which thrall-like fear of his cannot be so removed." Goethe says that "superstition forms part of man, and that he in vain flatters himself he can completely banish it. Instead of quitting him, it takes refuge in the most mysterious depths of his being, whence it re-appears suddenly as soon as it feels itself less violently pursued." The word "superstition" is derived "a metu vindictæ superstantis—a fear of heavenly vengeance ready to fall on the guilty;" from which dread deliverance can only be obtained by the doctrines of divine faith. The axe applied thus to the root, afterwards the Church strikes off each branch one by one. Then we can turn our steps fearlessly along arched walks of twilight groves and through this obscure territory, now stripped of all its terrors for us, after the hallowed words. The delusive grottos have vanished, and with them all the terrible phantoms of the wood. The sloping lawns, the springs of water, and the luxuriant trees, are all now restored to their true beauty, smiling with simple sweet peace in the beams of the rising sun.

But observe how each popular delusion, of which we find a trace upon our way, points to the Church that has condemned it. "It is related to us that some still worship trees," say the fathers in ancient council assembled. "Carefully, then, must bishops and priests endeavour, that the trees, consecrated to demons, which the vulgar people worship, or have in such veneration, that no one dares to break off a branch, or a twig, be wholly rooted up, and burnt. Stones, also, which in ruinous and woody places are venerated, must be dug up and removed. It must be inquired whether any herdsman or hunter be accustomed to recite diabolic songs over bread, or herbs, or any nefarious ligaments, which they hide in a tree, or cast on the ground, at the meeting of two or three ways, in order to deliver animals from distempers, or to injure others; and these men are to be excommunicated. It must be inquired whether any one makes vows at trees, or fountains, or at stones, as if at altars, or lights a candle there, or offers any gift, as if there were a certain deity there which could cause good or evil *." The laws of the Visigoths, inspired by the Church, condemned those who consulted auguries, to receive a hundred stripes. Against the pagan custom of making similitudes of feet at the junction of two roads, we find St. Eloy vehemently preaching. But, not to delay here, let us observe only the rules that were given to rustics to follow when assailed by superstitious fear; for

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* Burchardi Decret. lib. x. c. 2. 10. 18. 32.

these evince such judgment and study of the human heart, that it is difficult not to find direction in them. "When you feel a superstitious fear to do anything," says the book De Regimine Rusticorum, "expressly do the act, and the temptation will cease *." Accordingly, the effects throughout the world were immense: "vetus error abiit." "I see that I did wrong to give credit to prognostics," says the Spaniard in Calderon's play of Life is a Dream; "for though there are bad inclinations, they may be surmounted, and the most powerful planet cannot direct our free-will in a fatal and irresistible manner; for, in fine, man has not been created to obey the stars †." Again, in the Constant Prince of the same poet, when certain signs are remarked as foreboding evil, Don Fernando replies, "These vain terrors can only assail Moors, and not Christians, who have no faith in auguries. When we undertook this war, it was not through love of glory, nor in order that human eyes might read of our exploits in immortal books. We have come to extend the faith of God. Weak mortals ought, indeed, to fear his chastisements; but He does not give such warnings. We have come to serve, not to offend Him, and since we are Christians, we ought to think and act as Christians." "There be sum," says Sir John Maundeville, "that seyn that sume bestes hav gode meetynge, that is to seye, for to meete with hem first at morne; and sum bestes wykked meetynge; and that they have proved ofte tyme that the hare hathe fulle evylle meetynge and swyn; and to such folk it is an evylle meetyng of ravenes. But nathless, therfore, schold noght a man putten his beleeve in suche thinges; but always have fulle trust and beleeve in God, our sovereyn Lord." These fancies caused the Catholic Church to require many questions, which she proposed thus for prelates on their visitations, "Have you acted like those, who, when anxious to find a lodging for the night, if that bird which takes mice, should fly on the way before them, trust to that augury more than to God? If so, you must do penance on bread and water for five days. Have you acted like those who fear to set out in the morning before cock-crow, thinking that unclean spirits have more power to hurt during these hours than after cock-crow? If so, penance of ten days on bread and water must be done ‡." Here, then, a remark is suggested which will lead us to the furthest limits of this region, ending in a belief of the miraculous graces which God continues to impart within His Church. For all this shows how natural is fear to the human wanderer on first setting forth to traverse life's phantasmal forest. What need of constant protection! often of strange deliverance, like that of the Earl of Salisbury, in the reign of Henry III., when, through

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* 149.

† Calderon's Life is a Dream.

‡ Burchardi Decret. lib. xix.

the intercession of the blessed Virgin, he was saved from shipwreck, off the Isle of Rhé, where he was received in the Cistercian abbey, and sheltered from his enemies who sought to kill him; all which is so beautifully related by the monk of St. Alban's. Oh! without a belief in a particular providence, and the power of hallowed words, from a pure heart, and the angel guardian that sails upon the bosom of the air, and the shadow of the great wings, under which we pray, to take our nightly rest, how should we tremble thus passing! The Catholic Church gives these assurances to men, and thereby justifies her claim to their allegiance. The charm dissolves apace; and, as the morning steals upon the night, melting the darkness, so their rising senses begin to chase the ignorant fumes that mantled their clearer reason. The Church has satisfied their thirst, and so wins them everlastingly to her bosom.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROAD OF MIRACLES.

The wilderness presents a scene appropriated to discourse on those superior powers which constrained the magician Cyprian to pass from darkness to light, and from the service of evil spirits to the worship of Christ. Without leaving the region of wonders, therefore, all our talk shall not be for the night:—

> "Invenies et quod manè, Sabine, legas."

Here the whole aspect of the forest is lightsome, though grave and majestic. Palms entwine their beautiful branches over it, and fig-trees cast their deep shadow: who would be thence that has the benefit of access? and yet mark how far are those who love the Catholic Church from the fond anxiety to which her enemies ascribe the confidence she inspires.—"In Ecclesia plus est bene vivere quam signa facere," says St. Isidore, who remarks also that St. Paul, who cured by a miracle the sickness of the father of Publius, in consideration of the infidelity of those who did not believe, treated Timothy, who was of the faith, not by prayer, but medicinally, to show that miracles were for the unbelievers*. The Père de Ligny observes, "that Christ never wrought a miracle when curiosity or malignity was the motive of asking for it †." "Admire not the power of miracles," says the ancient rule of hermits, "but the self-command of a

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* D. Isidori, de Summo Bono, lib. i. c. 27, 28. † Hist. de J. C.

devout soul. The greatest of all miracles is to conquer evil passions, as to convert a sinner is more meritorious than to raise a dead man from the grave*." St. Jane de Chantel, we read, "never wished to hear of miracles, or revelations in confirmation of our faith, and she used generally to cause them to be omitted in the readings in the refectory†." The monks of Grandmont found the affluence of people to their church, in consequence of the miracles of St. Stephen, so troublesome, booths and fairs being established round them, that they declared they would take up his bones and cast them into the river‡. The canon, in the time of Charlemagne, is no less significative—"There are men," it says, "who circulate apocryphal writings, as the false detestable epistle which last year was said to have fallen from heaven; such things should be burnt. It is common to find men who lead a vagabond life seeking to deceive the credulous who are not on their guard§." But with this caution and reserve, the Catholic Church united the promise of special protection and of miraculous agency, which, indeed, could not with innocence be concealed, since an Angel had declared that it is good to hide the secret of a king, but honourable to reveal and confess the works of God‖. The Church implies, that even the ordinary channels of grace to the human race are miracles; for, in allusion to baptism, in the prayer on holy Saturday, she says, "Deus, cujus antiqua miracula etiam nostris sæculis coruscare sentimus," which interpretation some neglecting to remark, have impiously denied the adequacy of rites by Christ Himself ordained. But here we are to observe extraordinary manifestations, and to read what they signify.

"The credulity of mankind," says Butler, "is acknowledged; and the suspicions of mankind ought to be acknowledged too¶." If we hear the Roman poet, we can understand, why, in our age, there is more need of guarding against the latter, for, saith he,

"Credula res amor est**;"

and the source of such credulity is, in general, we may fear, dried up. True, as St. Thomas says,—

"Procedentibus, non crevit,
Prophetia, sed decrevit,
Hominum temporibus††."

"For, to convince the proud, what signs avail?
Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?"

"But," as Rupertus says, "the rational man judges rightly when

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[*] Regula Solitariorum, lxviii. ap. Luc. Holstein. Codex Reg.
[†] De Chaugy, Mem. de S. Jeanne de Chantel, iii. c. 1.
[‡] Levesque, Annales Ordin. Grandimontis, cent. 1.
[§] Nisard, vie de Charl.
[‖] Tobias 12.
[¶] Analogy, ii. 7.
[**] Ovid, Met. vii. 19.
[††] Doct. Ang. Sum. Theol. Rhyth. Synop. iii.

he says that He who made all things, and nature itself, can consequently conquer all things, and nature itself,—quia qui omnia fecit, et ipsam naturam, consequenter omnia vincit, et ipsam naturam[*] :" truth overlooked by those who now declaim—

"As if they would confine the Interminable,
And tie Him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not Himself ;
And hath full right to exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From the effects of all contingency[†]."

That with his own laws the Creator does, at times, dispense, the Catholic Church has ever held, because she has ever witnessed proof; and consequently the path we are now treading will lead men to appreciate, in this particular, her wisdom, while it will satisfy the bent of their own souls to wonder and adore.

What it is you would see? If aught of grace or of amazement, cease your search. The Catholic Church can satisfy you, and that too while preserving you from the credulity of philosophers like Pliny, who passes in silence over real miracles, to chronicle the foolish errors of the vulgar who disbelieve them, as when he gravely says, "In Judæa rivus sabbatis omnibus siccatur[‡]!" Here indeed are no pale water-spectres issuing from lakes and fountains, in cold embrace to weep their beloved to death and vanish, but what should attract wonderers more,—glorious appearances of the ever-blessed One, at whose presence the spring of living water bursts forth and continues to refresh the valley, to denote that she has been seen with mortal eye, who came to smile us to life and to remain with us for ever.

But passing in silence these visions to children on the mountain side, now so wonderously attested, though as yet without any sanction beyond the conviction of individual and cautious observers, and omitting also mention of those miraculous cures produced in our own times in so many places far and near, upon evidence that it is irrational to reject, let us confine our observation to ancient attestations. Let our traveller mark those of the miraculous cures, by the intercession of our Lady of Mont Serrat, which are given at the end of the history of that monastery[§], or those furnished by eye-witnesses as having been wrought after the martyrdom of Charles the Good[||], or those so formally delivered and so graphically and artlessly related as having taken place in different benedictine abbeys, for the

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[*] Ruperti Abb. de Victoria verbi Dei, lib. xi. 26.

[†] Milton, Sam. a.

[‡] Nat. Hist. lib. xxxi. 18.

[§] Dom Louis Montegut. hist. de Notre Dame du Mont Serrat.

[||] Fr. Gualter. Tarvanens. Vita S. Caroli Mart.

truth of which a cloud of living witnesses is appealed to in the general chronicle of the order by Dom Antonio de Yepes*, and he will feel assured that there can be no difficulty in distinguishing limits, when he passes from the wilds of superstition to the truly solemn and divine precincts where most high miracles are seen.

The wonders to which this path leads, are not like those Glendower doated on when Hotspur complained of being sometimes angered by his telling him of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies, and such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff as puts him from his faith. They are most majestic spectacles, in harmony with what the sacred Scriptures relate and prophesy, and they possess an intrinsic power to act like grace itself upon the heart of man. In general, too, there is something in the very simplicity of the details respecting the operation, which is calculated to make the most sceptical reflect. How impressive, for instance, are the words of St. Benedict when he knelt and raised the dead child of the peasant to life, saying, "Domine, non aspicias peccata mea, sed fidem hujus hominis qui resuscitari filium suum rogat: et redde in hoc corpusculum animam quam abstulisti †!"

In the ancient records of miracles we find a studied aversion to all refinement of style or prettiness of arrangement. There is no attempt at producing an effect beyond what should be inspired by the fact itself, which is plainly and simply told. Let us hear Matthieu Paris: "This year, 1134, a certain scholar, who was tormented day and night with a painful illness, so that through the suffering he used to cry out like a woman in labour, invoked the blessed Virgin many times; and one night, when he was in great agony, she appeared to him in white and touched him, and with the touch he was instantaneously cured ‡."

"I have a son John," says the illustrious Don Joseph Gonzales, "who when he was four or five years old was afflicted with epilepsy so grievously that each night we feared would be his last; the fits, which lasted at first only while one could repeat the Credo, becoming more fearful, so that the whole night he used to remain insensible. This state lasted till his tenth year, causing me and his mother bitter grief. All human skill failing, I fled to Father Michael de Ovenja, confessor of Marina de Escobar, who obtained her consent that my son should be brought to her to receive her blessing. He led my boy to the holy lady. What passed can be described better by himself; only this I know, that the lad described his malady, that the virgin spoke kindly to him, prayed, signed, and blessed him; told him to hope in God, and that she would obtain power from

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* Chron. Gen. tom. i. p. 129—132.

† D. Greg. ii. 32.

‡ Ad ann. 1134.

his mother that he might play with other boys and take the air. The result of that benediction was so mighty, that from that hour, it was in May or June of the year 1625, to this day, the 7th of December, 1633, by the mercy of God, he has never had the slightest symptom of his former or of any other sickness *." Moreover the greatest caution is evinced by the old writers who relate such things. "This miracle I pass over," says the historian of the bishops and abbots of Tours, "since I only know of it from the relation of others †."

Let us hear two narratives by Cæsar of Heisterbach :—

"Some time ago, when the Catholics were signed against the Albigensian heretics, two good priests, passing through that country, seeing a church desolated on the road-side, one said to the other, 'It is Saturday, let us enter this church and say mass in honour of our Lady,' for they carried along with them a book and chalice and vestments. Before the mass was finished, they were betrayed to the heretics, who seized them, and dragging the priest from the church tore out his tongue. His companion with much labour led him to Cluny, and commended him to the care of the monks, who, as Catholics and monks, received him devoutly. On the night of the Epiphany, as solemn vigils were sung, striking the wall with a staff, he called the ministers, who asking what he wished, he made signs to take him to the church, whither they carried him ; and there placed before an altar, he having invoked the Mother of mercy, was miraculously and instantaneously cured. Then in consequence he became a monk. When John the Scholastic of Xantes was in the province, having heard of the miracle, he came to Cluny and asked to see the monk, whose tongue, still bearing marks of the mutilation, he examined, and from whose lips he heard the narrative as related to us ‡."

The second narrative is thus given :—"Adam, a priest and monk in Lucka, related to me as follows. 'When I was a boy,' he said, 'I had a disease of the head, so that my fellow scholars did not like to sit or read next me. The first prayer I had learned was the angelic salutation, which I repeated often. Being placed at a monastery of Westphalia to learn letters, daily going to school or to matins, I used to pass a certain conventual church dedicated to St. Mary, before which I used always to repeat three salutations. One night, thinking that I heard the bell for matins, I rose up trembling, and coming to that monastery, finding the church shut, I said three "Hail! Marys," on bended knees, according to my custom ; when, rising up, I found the door open, and there was such brightness in the

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, P. ii. lib. iii. c. 12.

† De Gestis Ep. Turonens.

‡ vii. c. 24.

church that it was as bright as day. There I beheld a wondrous vision; and our Lady seemed to call me, saying, "Good child, take some fruit of ligni fusilis, and wash your head thrice with it in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and then she placed her hand on my head. Next morning I told the vision to the brother who took care of me, who went immediately into the next valley and gathered the fruit and washed my head, and from that hour I was cured*.'" Indeed, adds this old author, "in Montpellier, which is a source of medicinal art, so many cures are wrought in a certain church of our Lady, that physicians, envying the grace, are accustomed to say to the sick poor, Go to the church of St. Mary, bear a light to it, and you will be cured; and when they say this ironically, the poor repulsed by them fly to her and are cured †."

That many persons were drawn by such attestations to recognize truth, and constrained thenceforth to remain with it, would be but a fair inference from marking the emotions which their recital caused; for hardly in every instance could a barren admiration be the result. "There was a venerable preacher," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, "who used to relate in his sermons a narrative which he had heard from a miller in Lubeke, respecting his miraculous recovery from a paralytic stroke by a vision of the blessed Virgin appearing to him; and as often as he related this history, he used to see many of his auditors dissolved in tears ‡." "But in our times," says an interlocutor in a dialogue by Savonarola, "no miracles are wrought. Yea, many by the mercy of God, is the reply—Imo multa per Dei misericordiam §." Matthieu Paris says, "that the prodigious and undeniable miracles wrought by God in honour of St. Edmond, could induce men to believe that the times of the apostles had returned ||." Men, however careless on their passage, could not remain wholly ignorant of such events. It is true there are many who would go on the slightest errand to the Antipodes, who, as Benedict says, "would fetch a tooth-picker from the furthest inch of Asia, or a hair off the great Cham's beard, or do any embassage to the Pigmies," rather than move three miles to investigate the truth of miracles which they are resolved to deny; but they could not avoid hearing of them, like a recent traveller in Spain, who remarks that in that country in the rural districts more reliance is placed on miracles than on medicines. They would be spoken of in hostels; they could be seen attested by diverse monuments erected on the spots where they had passed, as those which the contemporaries of St. Germain of Auxerre had erected to perpetuate the memory of what he had wrought; several of which

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* vii. c. 25. † vii. c. 25. ‡ 478.

§ Savonar. De Veritate fidei Christianæ. || Ad ann. 1241.

the poet Heric declares that he had seen, commemorating a popular gratitude, which, as a late historian well observes, "cannot be otherwise explained than by admitting the truth of the miracles which had produced it *." Of course there would be sinister interpretations offered to counteract the effect; but travellers never did always lie, though fools at home condemn them. The Duchess de Bar, sister of Henry IV. and a protestant, was much struck at the miraculous cure effected by an Ambrosian monk of Milan, who happened to pass through Nancy. "Her confidants," says Pierre Matthieu, "in order to dissipate the impression, told her that the monk was a sorcerer; but the cures which he effected were not made by characters and ligatures, or billets, or unknown words murmured with trembling, nor by all the drugs of Apulia sold in the shop of the magician, nor by any act of superstition, or any form damnable which would damn those who used it, but by exorcism, prayer, and penance †." These signals by the way were not however confined to miraculous cures and visions. What perhaps is calculated to direct our wanderer more forcibly and clearly still is, the proof he has so often heard and even perhaps experienced of supernatural deliverance in the various emergencies to which life under every circumstance exposes men—to which Shakspeare alludes, saying that, "most it is presumption in us, when the help of Heaven we count the act of men." Those impressions which the moderns would call presentiments, are ascribed in the ancient books to the instrumentality of guardian angels enabling men to escape from coming danger ‡; as in the instance of the Roman lawyer who saved himself and his family, from the falling in of his house in Rome, by following a warning in the night; and in that of some hunters, who, from a similar impulse felt by one of them, fled during a storm out of a cavern in which they had taken shelter, on which the lightning immediately afterwards fell, shattering the rocks. The histories relative to the miracles of St. Bridget conduct us to solemn scenes of northern desolation, to

> "Bothnia's gulph, with glassy ice o'erspread,
> Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,
> On polish'd sandals o'er the imprison'd tides,"

may well remember the efficacy of holy prayer. In these histories we hear of strange adventures and perils upon frozen lakes and frozen seas, in vast forests of pines, haunted by robbers and pirates, still wilder than those shores §." Close

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* Lefeuve, hist. de St. Germ. l'Aux.

† Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. vii.

‡ De la Cerda, De Excellentia Cœlestium Spirit. c. 19.

§ Rev. Extrav. S. Birg.

to the monastery of St. Bridget, says her biographer, "in the kingdom of Gothland, or Sweden, is a vast lake, which, on the coming on of a thaw, when a strong tempest blows, presents a horrible aspect ; for the ice, though two arms thick, will then break into great fissures, while one mass of ice rising over another will leave crevices through which men and cattle are submerged. On one occasion, some travellers seeing the horrible collision and the hideous vortex encompassing them, invoked God and the prayers of St. Bridget, when, lo ! the ice on which they rested separated from the rest and wafted them safely to the shore *."

Nor can there be wanting to the wanderer a clue to the Catholic Church, furnished by solemn interpositions of Almighty power to reward the faithful and to punish adversaries, as those which dictated the remark of Cæsarius, " Si Deus tanta et talia justis ostendit in via, quanta putas illi ostendet in patria † ?" "Evil men think not on judgment ; but they that seek after the Lord take notice of all things ‡." Yes, on this road we have witnesses infinitely credible, men of good life and observation strange. " The Count of Fulka, a heretic and aider of heretics," says Cæsarius, " when he recovered his last castle broke out into blasphemy, saying, ' Whether God will or not, whether the Roman Church and all the saints will or not, I will have my land ;' and soon after, falling from his horse, deprived of the use of all his limbs in succession, only retaining the power of his tongue, with which he disdained confession to the last, he after some months died impenitent §." Even the ambiguous usages of a simple age seem to have been at times employed, supernaturally, to lead men of better will than knowledge to a sense of the Almighty power, of which the same author supplies the following example : " A certain rustic, having enmity against another, gave money to a malignant man of the order of travellers, of which are many, to burn his house ; who entered under the form of religion, and at a convenient moment set it on fire. Unmindful of the hospitable reception he had met with, the wretch, after it was rebuilt, having received more money, set it again on fire. The owner, disturbed and suspecting all, accused some, who purged themselves by the ordeal of hot iron. The house was rebuilt, and the iron inserted in a corner of the wall. The false pilgrim came again, and again he was well received. On remarking the iron, he asked why it was there ; and being told that this was the iron which had served in the ordeal, he said it might be made of some use ; and touching it, his hand was burnt, and he cried out ; which, when the owner observed, he caught hold of him and accused him before the judge, and

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* Vita B. Cath. c. 19.

† vii. 20.

‡ Prov. xxviii.

§ xi. c. 51.

then, confessing his crime, he was executed on the wheel *." But while proceeding on to truth we may overtake some few upon this path, still victims to superstitious terror, gazing at the sky to watch the tempest, and draw some forbidden inference from its rage; and we should observe, how at last these men too may be led by their unwarranted impressions to that Church, which leaves undetermined what is beyond human knowledge, content with chronicling the observations of credible witnesses, and with assenting to the belief that her Divine Founder has shown signs in the heavens, to proclaim the reality of his cross. As no part of the great book of nature was void of spiritual signification, so the observance of the sky may have led many, besides Constantine, to the foundation of divine faith. Without stopping to speculate on the probability of human witnesses in regard to such phenomena, let it suffice here to note the fact, that history supplies instances, in different ages down to the present time, of certain appearances in the air, wonderfully appropriate to the events of the day, assuming, and whether naturally or by especial fiat it skills not to decide, the form of the Catholic symbol, and so leading many to reflect on the great truth of human redemption which it represents to their astonished eyes. Let us hear Cæsarius, " When Oliver the Scholastic was preaching the cross in Friesland, in the town of Bedia, in the month of May, on the Friday before Pentecost, as I remember, he told me that three crosses appeared in the air. Another time, in the town of Sotershuse in the same country, a blue cross appeared near the sun during the same preaching. And a third apparition occurred in the diocese of Utrecht, in the town of Docheym, where St. Boniface was crowned with martyrdom, and on the very day of his anniversary, which last apparition was in the form of a vast white cross, which many thousands beheld at the same station. 'This we all saw,' said Oliver to me, 'amongst others the Lord Henry, our abbot, and his monk Winard †.'" Before St. Louis took the cross, the venerable father Thomas Cantipratan, a Belgian dominican, saw, in the year 1246, a luminous cross in the air, appearing to be in length about eight cubits ‡. William of Newbury supplies another instance, " A white cross, with our Lord upon it as seen in our churches," says he, " was beheld in the air in England at the beginning of the reign of Richard I. It was in the afternoon. The crowd at first stood stupified; and then all fell on their knees, watching it. After a time the terrible vision seemed to depart and hold the middle air, into which shortly the stupendous thing vanished. Let each person interpret this as he pleases, Quid enim divi-

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* x. c. 36. † lib. x. c. 37—39.

‡ De Jonghe, Belgium Dominicanum, 147.

nitas eo significare voluerit nescio *." Matthieu Paris records similar instances; one of which, most remarkably described, occurred on the night of St. John the Baptist in the year 1227, when more than 60,000 men took the cross in England. This aerial crucifix had been first seen by a waggoner and his son as they passed with fish by night near Woxebridge, whose report the next day in all the markets on their way was believed by no one, till the same vision on the succeeding night seen by thousands convinced the multitude of its truth. In fine, mere natural phenomena of an unusual kind, being viewed by some persons in connexion with passing events, as the expression of a certain sympathy of the visible nature with human misery, can awaken sentiments which are favourable to the reception or retention of divine truth. Such was the inference from the tempest on the eve of St. Simon and St. Jude, before the death of Henry I.†, and from the darkness throughout England, and the storms at the time when the battle of Evesham was being fought and Montford slain ‡. "While Richard I. was in Palestine, many prodigies," says William of Newbury, "seemed to proclaim the atrocity of these evils; for in the month of January, about the first watch of the night, between the north and west, the sky became so red, intersected with white lines without any clouds, for the stars shone clearly as if red with a light of blood, that the heavens seemed on fire; and when this horrible appearance had lasted all through England for two hours, filling the eyes and minds of men with stupor, it gradually disappeared. Again, in the month of February of the next year, when the report of the king's captivity was not yet known in England, the same sign appeared after midnight, while monks were singing their lauds to the Lord. We have known many of these religious men, in different provinces, who were terrified by the red light through the glass windows, and many supposed that the adjacent buildings had caught fire, and rushed forth, till, having recognized the fearful sign, they returned to their stalls filled with dread, to continue the divine psalmody §." Proud science will smile at the latter narratives: those sunk in the lowest depths of bestial ignorance may echo its derision, like the impious Roman, as I write this page, who scorns God's vengeance while gazing on the wondrous sky of blood and fire, that seems to announce his immense, eternally execrable crime to the whole universe: but I may be pardoned for citing them, in order to exemply my position, that whatever bears the semblance of events beyond the common and natural order can impart a salutary direction by inspiring reve-

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* Guiliel. Neubrigens. Rer. Anglic. lib. iv. 6.

† Matt. Paris, 1135.

‡ William de Shepishered.

§ Id. iv. 36.

rence for the supreme power, whose works, after all, bespeak his presence no less when wrought by ordinary laws, than by what we are agreed to term miraculous interposition.

After traversing this whole region, we can feel how immeasurably greater and more beautiful is the marvellous of Catholicity, which the dear Father of us all produces, than any work of man's highest art which may be offered in its place. In order to behold Him in his gracious manifestations has the heavenly Gardener, in his abundant mercy, granted to his beloved children these wonders, that we may become thereby better and happier; and that we may have no temptation to walk in our rash wilful circles, which would lead us again from Paradise and from Himself. To turn here from Catholicity would be to grow less and less disposed to learn the parable from the fig-tree—less and less able to rise up from the sleep of custom and the senses, of human obduracy and irrational blindness, to profit by the words which shall never pass away, though heaven and earth will pass away—less and less likely to find ourselves in the end amongst those who will lift up their heads at that tremendous advent, the certainty of which is foretold even by all human traditions and philosophy itself, when all the tribes of the earth will mourn at beholding the last miracle, which no man will be able to reject, when the militant and resistible shall pass with great power and majesty into the triumphant, great, opposeless Church to reign, by all creation glorified, for evermore.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ROAD OF JOY.

PROCEEDING now through vines that skirt a new lightsome path, with yellow butterflies fluttering over them in gay profusion, we come to the great road which forms the first of those ways belonging to St. Bonaventura's fourth journey, designated from the inebriating love of eternal things. We seem to have almost left the wood, so wide are here the openings, and we overtake a great company, who all seem exhilarated like ourselves, as if there were even a pleasure in watching from a distance how the sunbeams chase the shadows over the grass. As men, fatigued after riding many hours in the monotonous gloom of a thick forest, suddenly are cheered and gladdened thus on coming to a

space cleared away by woodmen, where again they feel the warm rays and hear the singing birds, and see the blue hills, the bosky acres, the unshrubb'd downs, and the rich scarf of slopes smiling with vineyards and villages, forming a beautiful horizon; so do I hail this issue from the shades of the dark mystic region, albeit for the last hour most majestic, through which we have lately passed. The love of joy is that which impels us on this new way, true sons of Adam, "soon inclined to admit delight the bent of nature:"—

> "All tend to perfect happiness, and urge
> The restless wheels of being on their way,
> Whose flashing spokes, instinct with infinite life,
> Bicker and burn to gain their destined goal."

I said the love but not the presence of joy is the impression on this path; for till we have gained the centre, that will be soon in view, all hope of realizing it is vain. It is remarked by a Spanish writer, that "sadness is the dominant feature of the physiognomy of the savage man;" and infidelity, whatever form or modification it may assume, is attended with the same result, as may be witnessed in the sophists of France and the votaries of different sects in England, who all wear the same gloomy countenance, as if holding smiles in horror, like the fresh-caught savage.

The abbot Rupert and Pope Innocent III.* remind us that Alleluia is a foreign word of mystery to express joy. "For in the want of this present life, no one," adds the former, "can rejoice excepting by hope, hungering and thirsting for what is reserved. Therefore this Hebrew word remains in the office, to signify that joy is a stranger in this life, and to indicate rather than express it by the word †."

> "We look before and after,
> And pine for what is not;
> Our sincerest laughter
> With some pain is fraught;
> Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

The best man without faith is like Tantalus ever thirsty—

> Πιέειν δ᾽ οὐκ εἶχεν ἐλέσθαι ‡.

Or, like Pliny the elder, of whom his nephew says that he was at supper when in danger, "Hilaris, aut, quod est æque magnum, similis hilari §." Therefore wisely does Spenser make proud

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* De Sacro Altaris Mysterio, ii. c. 31.

† Rupert. de Divinis Officiis, lib. i. c. 35.

‡ xi. 583.

§ Epist. xvi.

Sansfoy the father of Sansjoy. The philosopher in Faust who searches in the science of life and perceives only nothingness—the materialist who seeks happiness in the enjoyments of earth and finds only despair, may refuse to advance to the Catholic Church, which, as St. Bruno says, alone can lead us to the summum bonum ; but their wretched state points to it no less significantly than the hand of those who recognize the source of their jubilation ; for it shows, as St. Bruno proceeds to observe, that in this world the chief good cannot be found either in philosophy or in pleasure, since there has never been any one in this life so skilled in science, or so rich, and happy, and powerful, as to want nothing which he wished to have ; but he to whom anything is wanting, to whom his own sufficeth not, hath not attained to the chief good *. Besides, there is to be considered the mutability of the best things of earth,—"Creatura bonum," says St. Isidore, "sed non summum est, quia mutabilis est †." The lords at Pomfret, when they rode from London, were jocund, and supposed their states were sure ; but yet, you see, how soon the day overcast! "If joy is impeded by diseases of the body, how much more," asks Cicero, "by those of the mind? But the diseases of the mind," he adds, "are the cupidities, immense and vain, of riches, of glory, of domination, of pleasure ‡." Such characters bear with them their own punishment, the antidote to joy—

———— αἱ δὲ τοιαῦται φύσεις
αὑταῖς δικαίως εἰσὶν ἄλγισται φέρειν §.

And who from these griefs, except by means of Catholicity, or of principles which make men approximate to it, is free? "Then," as Plato says, "neither youth nor age can be happy if such passions are indulged in ‖. Lugebit terra, et herba regionis siccabitur." The man will languish with it and mourn—

"He dreams the shadows of the midday sun fall
Joyless on the hills, and knows not why ¶."

Yet, in his blindness, only to nature he appeals, crying,

"Oh, for Medea's wondrous alchymy,
Which, wheresoe'er it fell made the earth gleam
With bright flowers, and wintry boughs exhale
From vernal blooms fresh fragrance!"

"Hic itaque primus est error," says Sarasa. "Prima judiciorum perversitas, omnia velle pacare præter se **." What hopes of

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* S. Brunonis Exposit. de Confessoribus.

† D. Isidori, de Summo Bono, lib. i. c. 1.

‡ De Finibus, i. 18.

§ Œd. Tyr. 675.

‖ De Repub. i.

¶ Morris.

** De Sarasa, Ars semper gaudendi.

joy in the sweet May of youth! Well, but hear the issue: "It was a dream of childhood realized," says a recent traveller, "and brought with it some dreary remembrances barbed with poignant sorrows. Dreams, alas! are never realized till the freshness of the heart is gone, and their beauty has lost all that wildness which made it in imagination so desirable *." Our poet had marked this, and said, "All things that are, are with more spirit chased than enjoyed;" and elsewhere, "Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing—men prize the thing ungained more than it is." What careful provision for joy in the houses of the rich and prosperous! "Vix autem," as St. Stephen of Grandmont says, "habebit gaudium cui omne gaudium est odiosum, id est, Dominus †." Hence, high life, we are told, is oft a dreary void,

> "A rack of pleasures, where we must invent
> A something wherewithal to be annoy'd."

The same poet adds, too, in familiar phrase, that

> "Society is now one polish'd horde,
> Form'd of two mighty tribes, the Bores and Bored."

"Quis autem vere gaudet," asks St. Augustin, "qui bonum non diligit unde gaudet?" After visiting the Palace of the Science of Salvation with Dom John de Palafox, Bishop of Osma, we shall find, as he says, that "the Palace of the Spirit of the World, which before had appeared most splendid, with high columns, rich balustrades, and admirable gardens, wears the aspect rather of a miserable dreary ruin, obscured with filth, and having for inscriptions, not as before, the words—glory, joy, repose; but these—sadness, sorrow, vexation ‡." "Non est impiis gaudere," says the text, "quia per quæ peccat homo, per hæc torquetur §." Presented then through a wide opening to the view of our poor wanderers thus dejected and brought to a sense of truth by the consequences of an insane transgression, the Catholic Church seems to invite them to press forwards to her bosom in the words of her Saint Augustin—"Be glad in the things which God orders, that you may be glad in the Lord. Be glad in faith, be glad in hope, be glad in charity, be glad in mercy, be glad in hospitality, be glad in chastity. All these are good; treasures of the inward man, gems not of your chest but of your conscience. Love to be rich in these riches, which you can never lose by shipwreck ||; for hear," he says again, "Et plebs

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* Faber.
† S. Steph. Grandim. liber Sententiarum, c. 24.
‡ Voyage Spirituel.
§ D. Inn. Pap. III. De Contemptu Mundi, lib. i. c. 17.
|| S. August. serm. v.

tua lætabitur in te. To its own evil would it rejoice in itself; to its own good will it rejoice in thee. For when it wishes to have joys from itself, it finds mourning in itself. Now therefore, since all our joy is God, let him who wishes to rejoice securely rejoice in Him who cannot perish. For why, my brethren, do you wish to rejoice in silver? The silver or you will perish, and no one can tell which first. Both assuredly will perish, only it is uncertain which will the soonest. For neither can man remain here always, nor can silver remain always. So it is with gold, with vestments, with houses, with money, with lands, so even with this light. Be not, therefore, willing to rejoice in these things, but rejoice in that Light which has no setting, rejoice in that Light which no yesterday preceded, and which will have after it no to-morrows. What is that Light? Ego sum, inquit, lux mundi *." And now, methinks, a wondrous change has come over the forest, influencing those who traverse it. As the poet says,

"My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne,
And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts."

A chorus, in harmony with truth, seems to resume the ancient invocation, "O immense and brilliant air, resound with my cries of joy †!" It appears as if we saw realized the sacred words, "Exultabunt omnia ligna silvarum ante faciem Domini." Nor let distrust assail us at such new impressions attracting us with such force to the bright centre now gloriously in view. True, you are attracted, but, as St. Augustin says, "Think not that you are drawn unwillingly; the mind is drawn by love. Nor let us fear, saying, How shall I believe willingly if I am drawn? I say you are drawn by pleasure. What is it to be drawn by pleasure? Delight in the Lord, and He will grant the petition of your heart. There is a pleasure of the heart for him who tastes the sweetness of that celestial bread. If the poet could say, "Trahit sua quemque voluptas,"—not necessity but pleasure, not obligation but delectation,—how much more ought we to say, that a man is drawn to Christ who is delighted with truth, delighted with beatitude, delighted with justice, delighted with eternal life, all which is Christ? The mind has its pleasures, as the senses have theirs; therefore it is said of men—"Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ, et torrente voluptatis tuæ potabis eos; quoniam apud te est fons vitæ, et in lumine tuo videbimus lumen." We run after the odour of thy ointments. Do you show these things? Then you stretch out

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* S. August. in Ps. 37.

† Eurip. Ion, 1445.

a green branch to the sheep, and you draw him after you; you offer fruit to the child, and he is drawn—drawn by love. So it is with the Church. She draws us to herself—"quid enim fortius desiderat anima quam veritatem [*]?" But the Catholic Church stretches out to us avowedly the branch of joy, showing another analogy with the whole of nature, which seems to say, as Pliny remarks, "Lo! I offer you every kind of pleasure and delight, placing fruits so that they can be gathered without stooping for them, or, if you should be too little, or too stiff to stretch or climb for them, causing them to fall at your feet." Her tradition is the tradition of joy. Hence on this path we hear chanted, as if by men returning from her offices, such sentences as these:—"Servite Domino in lætitiâ [†].—Lætetur cor quærentium Dominum [‡].—Lætamini in Domino et exultate justi, et gloriamini omnes recti corde [§].—Lætabitur justus in Domino [||].—Lætetur Israel in eo qui fecit eum [¶].—Dedisti lætitiam in corde meo [**].—Beatus populus qui scit jubilationem, Domine: in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt, et in nomine tuo exultabunt totâ die [††].—Venite exultemus Domino [‡‡].—Cognovi quia non esset melius nisi lætare, et facere bene in vitâ suâ [§§].—Jucunditas cordis hæc est vita hominis; et thesaurus sine defectione sanctitatis, et exultatio viri et longævitas [||||]." On the nativity of St. John the Baptist, the Catholic Church expressly prays for joy—"Da populis tuis spiritualium gratiam gaudiorum;"—and in the ancient prose, on the same day, for laughter—

"O lucerna verbi Dei, ad cœlestis nos diei
perduc luminaria.
Nos ad portum ex hoc fluctu, nos ad risum
ex hoc luctu,
tua trahat gratia. Amen."

It is remarkable, bearing in mind the gloomy sadness of those who reject the intercession of Mary, that the Church, whenever she invokes the blessed Virgin's aid, seems invariably to have in view the deliverance of men from sadness, and the attainment of present as well as of eternal joy—"a præsenti liberari tristitiâ, et æternâ perfrui lætitiâ"—being her words, conformable to those of the sweet hymn—

"Iter para tutum,
Ut videntes Jesum
Semper collætemur."

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[*] S. Aug. tract. in Joan. 26.
[†] Ps. xcix.
[‡] Ps. civ.
[§] Ps. xxxviii.
[||] Ps. lxiii.
[¶] Ps. cxlix.
[**] Ps. iv.
[††] Ps. lxxxviii.
[‡‡] Ps. xciv.
[§§] Eccl. iii. 12.
[||||] Eccl. xxx. 23.

In this respect the devotions of all the saints are but her echo, as when St. Bridget cries—"Succurre nobis, Mater Christi, quæ mundo flebili gaudium intulisti; and again, Matris Christi gloriosa nativitas sit nobis perpetua jucunditas." So also St. Hildephonso, Archbishop of Toledo, cries—"Let us all exult and be glad in celebrating the glorious festival of the Nativity of the blessed Virgin Mary; for she is holy and admirable, in whom the Redeemer of all began the work of our deliverance[*]." The whole object of study and prayer, and of all mental cultivation, according to the concurrent testimony of Catholic instructors, is to provide, as Peter of Ravenna says,—"Ut intra domicilium synceri pectoris lætitiæ divinæ æternam præparet mansionem." We might be referred to St. Isidore teaching that we should be always cheerful and joyful[†]; and to St. Francis of Assisi exhorting his brethren to have interior and exterior joy, as being that state than which nothing is more feared by the demon[‡]: but not to multiply needlessly such incidental passages, let us observe that many Catholic authors write for the especial purpose of inculcating joy, as did Mathæus Bossus, of Verona, in his work, De salutaribus animi gaudiis, of which Angelo Politian writes, in a letter to Lorenzo de Medicis[§], as also the Spanish Jesuit, Alfonso Antonio de Sarasa, in his great work, Ars semper gaudendi demonstrata ex solâ consideratione divinæ Providentiæ; in which he shows how we should and can obey the Apostle, saying, Gaudete in Domino semper. To be joyful, he says, is an art. "Artis enim virtutisque est gaudium, non naturæ[‖]." It is only to be acquired by means of an art, and this art consists in the regulation of the conscience[¶]. Joy is not a fortuitous thing, to be gained by accident. It is the highest product of a most ingenious art, and therefore I add, with Seneca, "Hoc ante omnia fac, disce gaudere." But granting it to be an art, we shall soon discover that it is only to be acquired in a divine school, of which truth even the Gentile philosophers were so aware, that they denominate it a gift; and that this gift of joy, which Pindar ascribes to Prometheus in the lines,

——— Ἐν δ' ἀρετὰν
ἔβαλεν καὶ χάρματ' ἀνθρώ-
ποισι Προμαθέος αἰδώς[**],

is really imparted to men in the richest abundance by Divine faith, will appear from a consideration of the saints, and of the spirit and manners of a Catholic population. If it be asked who

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[*] In Nativitate B. Mariæ.
[†] Pug. xi.
[‡] Collatio xi.
[§] Mab. Iter Ital. 173.
[‖] id. 6.
[¶] P. ii. Tract. 1.
[**] Olymp. 7.

are visibly the most cheerful and happy men that walk this earth, the most apt to receive, as a late poet says, "that impress of angelic joy which thrills by mystic sympathy from outward things*?" beyond all doubt the answer should be, Catholics of the most religious life. These are the men who exclaim, with Bellarmin, "What joys does God confer upon sinners in this world! what delights and beauties are here to all in common granted! What then must be the pleasures reserved in heaven for his faithful†?" It is they who are anointed with the oil of gladness above their fellows. It is they who verify what St. Clement of Alexandria says, "that the whole life of a just man is like one continued festival." It is they who repeat in every age what Verrolles, the Apostolic Vicar of Montchourie, so admirably declares to the present generation, that the Catholic life, even in its austerest form, that of missionaries, "is the shortest road to joy and happiness." But we have such express testimonies to the fact furnished by the biographers of holy men, that any doubt of the truth of such assertions must be inadmissible. Thus we read of the Abbot Pacomius, "faciem habebat hilarem;" of St. Romuald, "vultu adeo semper læto fuisse, ut intuentes exhilararet;" of the Abbot Theonas, that one could not observe the joy of his countenance without gladness; of St. Anthony, that he could be distinguished in a crowd by the joy painted on his countenance; of the community of the Abbot Apollonius, consisting of five hundred monks, that there was not a sad face amongst them all. "Francis de Sales, I assure you," St. Jane de Chantal used to say, "was a saint, and he had a spirit of gracious joy, and he could laugh heartily when there was occasion‡." St. Jane herself, we read, was always in her conversation in the parlour as graciously sweet as she was wise and holy. "Look you," she said to a reverend father, "at my age; and with the interior state in which God holds me, and amidst the multitude of affairs, I have no desire to laugh or speak; but if you saw me with our young people, you would find that I can be gay, and that I can laugh too with the rest of them§." There was it seen that "the subtlest thinker, from ease of thoughts unbent, will laugh the loudest with his fellows." In the morning prayers of St. Paulinus, we find an affecting demand, which shows what he thought of the delicate tenure by which cheerfulness is held—"Ne sit mihi tristis ulla dies," he says; and again,—"Adsit læta domus||." But yet, what can any one who shrinks most from the touch of sorrow desire more? Hurter remarks, that Pope Innocent III. knew how to associate

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* Morris.

† De Æterna Felicitate Sanctorum, 3.

‡ De Changy, Mem. de St. Jeanne &c. iii. c. 22.

§ Id. iii. c. 5.

|| Div. Paulini op.

the gravity of his life with gaiety; that he liked to be a spectator of amusing games, and to take part in public festivities*; and in this respect he was not singular among holy men. In the ancient rule of hermits, we read that a certain hunter, passing through the woods, saw the Abbot Anthony rejoicing with his brethren, and that he was displeased; but that the old man reminded him that he ought to learn even from his own bow the necessity of occasional relaxation †.

The stranger sat at table once with ten French prelates, in the house of my Lord of Forbin Janson, the late Bishop of Nancy; and those who have had similar opportunities of judging, will agree with him, that the joyous and almost puerile gaiety of such holy and profoundly thoughtful men can impart as much edification to the soul as the noblest discourse on virtue. Leonardus Arretinus seems to have felt the same impression when writing to Robert Ruffus, to describe the beautiful villa of Alamunn, Archbishop of Pisa, half-way between Pisa and Lucca, on the wooded banks of the river Auseric, with the mountains in the rear; a place, he remarks, admirably adapted for all kinds of rural pleasure: for, he says, that he and two other friends, with the Archbishop for leader, met there to become boys again for a day; and that they amused themselves playing in the river, taking off their shoes and leaving their cloaks on the bank under the tall poplars—"in quo ita lusimus," he says, "ut pueri, ita clamavimus ut ebrii, ita concertavimus ut dementes insanique videremur." The Archbishop himself, though hindered by religion from playing, stood looking on, and by his voice and laughter showed what pleasure he took in our festivity ‡. What smiling portraits abound in ancient books of devout Catholic men, evincing by their joyful mood and happy lives the fruits of divine faith, and verifying what St. John Climachus observes, that "when the whole man is united to divine charity, and, as it were, mingled with it, then also the outward man, as if in a mirror, shows the brightness and serenity of the soul §." Let us mark but two instances—the first being that of Baptist, the Mantuan, painted by himself in the following lines:—

"A teneris colui musas: mihi semper ad artes
 Ingenuas calcar cura paterna fuit.
Propterea manes ejus reverenter adoro:
 Et preces assiduæ sedulitate juvo.
Relligio placuit juveni; placuere cuculli
 Vitaque claustrali semisepulta domo.

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* Hurter Geschichte, Inn. III. xx.

† Regula Solitariorum, lx.

‡ Leon. Arret. Epist. lib. ii. c. 20.

§ Scal. Par. xxvii.

Me virtutis amor multas perduxit ad urbes :
  Et sophiæ varios fecit habere duces.
Plurima perlegi : didici, docuique ; nec ullum
  Dum licuit studii tempus inane fuit.
Multivagam Christo feci servire poesim,
  Et superis vires ingeniumque dedi.
Et mihi cura fuit nostros extollere ritus,
  Ac semper veteres extenuare deos—
Sæpe magistratus et publica munera gessi,
  Vitaque perpetuo facta labore fuit.
Sed quotiens adii perplexa negocia ; semper
  Eximia juvit me pietate Deus.
Per mare, per fluvios, ivi per saxa, per alpes ;
  Mortiferam pestem, bella, famemque tuli.
Sed superi casus mecum venere per omnes,
  Et mihi se fidos exhibuere duces.
Sic precor ut vitam quæ me rexere per omnem
  Prospera sint fini Numina sancta meo.
Ad senium veni, stadium vitale cucurri,
  Et fero jam dudum pro pugione rudem.
Liber ab hoc tandem mortali corpore vadam
  Ad superos ; vel quo me Deus ire volet.
Ipse mihi pater est ; quocunque vocaverit ibo,
  Et mala non ægra singula mente feram.
Me tamen illius precor ut clementia blande
  Suscipiat : sceleri nec sit acerba meo.
O populi, pacem qui me coluistis habete ;
  Et pro me accensis sacrificate focis.
Crebra sacerdotes pro me libamina Christo
  Reddite ; et ad veniam sollicitate Deum *."

The second portrait that I would propose is that of Louis Cornaro, likewise painted by his own hand, and so touched as if, while painting, he heard cavils that might recal the prior's words to Siegendorf—

——— " This were to be
Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget
Such things, and leave remorse unto the guilty."

" I have made," he says, " a fortune, which I did not inherit, though I was born rich, and that by the best means and most worthy, namely, by holy agriculture, not by arms or violence, to the injury of others, nor in traversing the seas at the risk of my life. I have made this fortune while sparing no expense proper for a gentleman. I have made it while spending much. I have built a church to God ; I have given it to a population which I caused to come into the world by banishing the bad air which had infested the place, so that children could not be brought up in it, and by draining off the waters. In making my

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* Bap. Mant. Epitome vitæ auctoris ad posteritatem.

fortune I have enriched many. I have assisted with my purse learned men, musicians, architects, painters, sculptors, and others. In making my fortune I have spent thousands on buildings and gardens. My very adversities have contributed to my happiness. Nothing can trouble my felicity. I have, in fine, no other grief but that caused by the death of my friends." Such is the passage, expressive of his free and joyous spirit—affected, presumptuous perhaps, it will be thought, but to those who accuse it one might reply in the words of St. Bernard—" Nihil est jucundius, nihil tutius, nihil diutius bonâ conscientiâ. Premat corpus, trahat mundus, terreat Diabolus, illa secura est *." The discourse of Cornaro on the sober life presents a beautiful picture of his domestic happiness during the period of his robust, cheerful, and studious old age in Padua. His palace had two vast apartments—one for summer, the other for winter. He spent the spring and autumn in his villa on the Euganean hills. With his eleven grandchildren he used, at the age of ninety-five, to chant his prayers morning and evening, like the late venerable Abbé du Bois, who did so to the evening before his death, when it was remarked he sung louder and sweeter than ever. Writing to Daniel Barbaro, Patriarch of Aquileia, he says, " O how fine my voice is become! If you were to hear me singing my prayers, accompanied with the harp, like David, I can answer for it that you would be pleased. I am sure that I shall die singing my prayers. The horrible thought of death causes me no trouble, though I know at my advanced age that it must be near, and that I was born to die. Neither am I troubled by the fear of punishment after death for my sins; for I am a Christian, and I ought to believe that I shall be delivered from it by the virtue of the sacred blood of Jesus Christ, who has wished to shed it in order to deliver us his faithful Christians. Oh, how beautiful is my life! Oh, how happy will be my end!" His prediction respecting his death was verified, as we shall see on another distant road. " To the temporal causes of his health and longevity we may add," says Vallery, " that Cornaro must have derived a new force and power of interior equilibrium in that celestial life which he had made for himself at the side of the earthly life, and in the happiness which he hoped from the goodness and mercy of God †."

Shall I add to these examples the portrait on a tomb? Yes, even amidst the solemn sanctity of death, Catholicism remembers joy; and a voice from the grave proclaims it—

> " Vixi lætus, lætus obivi,
> Et Domino vigilans Domino tandem obdormivi."

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* De int. domo, c. 23. † Curiosités et Anecdotes Italiennes.

Such words are inscribed on the sepulchre of Oswald Berus [*]. How remarkable, then, are these signals! For compare these testimonies of Catholics, as to their interior felicity, with the avowals of men without faith, of whose common grief a recent poet is only the faithful echo, when he cries, "Seeming to others happy, I am sorrowful within myself, having under my roof an evil guest. I am like the tower that encloses a sombre bell—the shadow is spread over my heart, and a worm preys upon it. As years, each paler and less crowned, pass over me, I see fly away my chimerical hopes—leaf after leaf, and all the summer of my life dies, leaving but the thorn; and I shed inwardly the tears in which all is bitterness;" or compare them with the sentences of the wise ancients, who say, with Pliny, that "no mortal is happy," and that "there is nothing wished for by men so often as death [†];" and you can come to no other conclusion, but that the desire of joy alone ought to be sufficient to lead men to Catholicity, and to establish upon foundations beyond the reach of all argumentation, their conviction of its divine truth.

But let us leave single portraits in the cloister and the palace, and mix with the multitude, to observe how the Catholic Church can attract by the spectacle of the joy which she imparts generally to the people, indicating how well she has been taught by Him who needeth not the tears of men, but who loveth the tribute of their cheerful hearts. Truly the Catholic Church has given proof of having long heard Him by whom "every heart is understood [‡]." Her most austere guides wave us on to follow her with words of adorable sweetness,—"Non indiget Deus lachrymis nostris, O Socii," says S. John Climachus, "neque hominem ex cordis angustiâ lugere vult: sed magis ex insigni ad Deum charitate, in hilaritate animæ lætari [§]."

While error under every form leaves nations exposed to all the great social and political calamities that result from the reign of passions uncontrolled, the Church averts them by her discipline and her daily sacrifice; for the good which the sublime and oldest poet of the Greeks desired for, the Argian land alone, is the object of her prayers offered in behalf of the whole world, imploring God that the flower of youth may not be cut off, that neither war nor sensuality may mow it down, that the tempest of battles may not burst on it, silencing the choir of harps, unchaining Mars, causing tears for the people and lamentations:—

ἥβας δ' ἄνθος ἄδρεπτον
ἔστω· μηδ' Ἀφροδίτας

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[*] Richebourcq—ultima verba, factaque, &c.

[†] Nat. Hist. lib. vii.

[‡] Ecclesiast. xvi. 20.

[§] Scal. Par. viii.

εὐνάτωρ βροτολοιγὸς Ἄ-
ρης κέρσειεν ἄωτον.—
μηδέ τις ἀνδροκμὴς
λοιγὸς ἐπελθέτω,
τάνδε πόλιν δαΐζων,
ἄχορον ἀκίθαριν,
δακρυογόνον Ἄρην
βοάν τ' ἔνδημον ἐξοπλίζων*.

Among the impressions produced by travelling, no one can be so little observant as to overlook those arising from the contrast presented by the spirit of a Catholic population in regard to joyfulness, and by that of a nation without faith. A divine voice comes to us on this road, denouncing what is witnessed in the latter. "Woe to you," it cries, "false prophets—because with lies you have made the heart of the just to mourn whom I have not made sorrowful; and have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his evil way and live†." Where are these words applicable? In what land do we observe the well-intentioned hearts of an innocent population mourning as far as they are influenced by their religious guides? For that there are such roads, no one can deny. Berne and Zurich, and the stern churls in the little principalities of Germany, that cling to their Lutheran delusions, may dispense our making observations nearer home to prove it—since there, as is said in Cymbeline of Britain, "you do not meet a man but frowns."

There are many Michols, each prepared to imitate her, as Dante says, "like a lady full of scorn and sorrow‡," wishing that surly melancholy should bake all blood, and make it heavy, thick, so that it should not run tickling up and down the veins; making, they add, that idiot laughter, keep men's eyes, and strain their cheeks to idle merriment, which is hateful to our purposes. We need not ask then what spirits have passed there to chill their hearts and mar their faces thus. Luther and Calvin have been there. They are tracked through the strong delusions that have soured them, and put a period to their gladsome days—

> "Pectora felle virent, lingua est suffusa veneno :
> Risus abest ; nisi quem visi movere dolores."

As swine that rub themselves at every turn and can have no rest, so all there seem constrained to toil in removing day and night, their mental efflorescence by spiteful suspicious and uncharitable speech. The only mirth there is what Milton

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* Æsch. Supp. 675. † Ezech. xiii. ‡ Purg. ii. 10.

defends as his "grim laughter," saying, "that although in the serious uncasing of a grand imposture,—for, to deal plainly with you, readers, prelaty is no better,—there be mixed here and there such a grim laughter as may appear at the same time in an austere visage, it cannot be taxed of levity or insolence; for it is not harmful to be angry, and withal to cast a lowering smile." Very reverent sport, truly; and done in the testimony of a good conscience. Such is the charming playfulness of the true Protestantism. Every where it has made, as far as it influences, which happily may not be to the extent its ministers desire, a stern people—a lowering people, a people in some respects stultified as to life's happiness, by the pride and mistrust which it engenders; each person, down to the youngest, having a February face, full of frost and cloudiness, or else—

————"A marble form,
A rite, a law, a custom: not a man
A frowner, as if to frown had been the trick
Of his machinery."

One might suppose that we were passing, like Perseus, through the rugged rocks of forests to reach the Gorgonean houses, seeing on the way only the images of men who had been changed into stone*. Pride has been at work here; envy has been at work here—suspicion, the spirit of irreverence—in a word, heresy, with all its unseemly train has blighted the joy of what was once undoubtedly a merry land—

"Afflatuque suo populos urbesque, domosque
Polluit†."————

O how I hail the sweet radiance of the sun of truth reflected in the manners, speech, spirit, and countenance of a truly Catholic population! There might you have beheld one joy crown another, there the models which Goethe beautifully describes, when saying, "Love and resignation, a sweet sociability, a pious veneration for the powers above us, breathed from all these faces, and were manifested in every posture and in each movement. The old man bald, and the child with its rich curling locks, the courageous youth, and the grave reflecting elder, like saints in glorified bodies, or angels soaring in the clouds, seemed all to enjoy the same happiness, because all were under the empire of the same innocent satisfaction, and of the same calm and pious hope. The most vulgar actions of these persons appeared to have some relation with the celestial life; and an offering in honour of God seemed to flow of itself from their holy and regenerated nature." Few are insensible to the charm

* Ovid. Met. iv. 12. † Met. ii. 17.

of these results. Even a recent traveller, who closely shuts his eyes against the guidance which they supply, after enumerating many fancied grievances in an Italian town, adds this involuntary testimony :—" It matters little ; even these are welcome to me. Give me the smiling face of the attendant, man or woman ; the courteous manner, the amiable desire to please and to be pleased ; the light-hearted, pleasant, simple air—so many jewels set in dirt,—and I am their's again to-morrow !" Another guide of the same character bears a similar testimony to the cheerfulness of the Spanish people. " Let all," he says, " mingle with the gay, good-humoured, temperate peasantry, free, manly, and independent, yet courteous and respectful." Wherever the Catholic Church has undisputed sway, the gloomy shades we have been describing disappear ; for divine faith is indeed the sun that maketh all things shine. Then the multitude, as a late poet says,

" Walk in joy—
Made free by love ; a mighty brotherhood
Link'd by a jealous interchange of good, a
Glorious pageant more magnificent than conqueror's return."

Here are all " enjoying the pleasures of the present world," as an old French author says, " in order to contract a desire for those of the next*." Rural works are here, and ordinary business, without painful care, yielding all that nature wants to men who " with undivided mind sing on their notes of joyous innocence ;" truly verifying the inspired text that Rupert cites with such affection, saying,

" Beatus populus qui scit jubilationem,
Domine, in lumine vultus tui ambulabunt."

" The celestial love that spurns," as Dante saith, " all envying in its bounty, with such effulgence blazeth," in the whole faithful people, that we seem to hear the prophetic sentence, " qui habitatis in terra, austri †," and its mystic interpretation by St. Odo, Abbot of Cluny, " that is, in the Church, warmed with the Holy Spirit ‡." Happy indeed, may we exclaim, adapting ancient language, the people who are nourished thus in the glorious wisdom of a sacred land—walking ever through a pure and brilliant air—

ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου
Βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθέρος §!

Yes, there is little of the melancholy element in a Catholic population. Joyous is the sunlight to their soul, since it is an

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[*] Réglement donné par une dame de haute qualité, 14.

[†] Esai. xxi. 14.

[‡] S. Odonis, Abb. Mor. in Job. lib. xxiii.

[§] Med. 825.

emblem of what they love to muse upon—the eternal light which shines in heaven's courts[*]. Claude could not have painted morning so beautifully as the paschal hymn for lauds represents it in every land of faith,—

"Aurora cœlum purpurat,
Æther resultat laudibus,
Mundus triumphans jubilat,
Horrens avernus infremit."

Virtue and hope and love, like light and heaven, surround their world; so that, without exclusions, to its whole pale can be addressed the Psalmist's words, "Sicut lætantium omnium habitatio est in te." Here, might Beatrice have said, is man comparatively guiltless; here in some sort a perpetual spring and every fruit, and this the far-famed nectar. Turning to the reader when such words are cited, I note perhaps a smile at the conclusion; but let him examine well the seed, and he will find that this joy of a Catholic population cannot be a mere earthly flower, though we may call this the primrose way to truth.

There is indeed a joy to be suspected and even rejected with heroic constancy. "Gaudere quidem bonum est," says St. Paullinus, "sed qui gaudet, si non inde gaudeat unde debet, non potest bonum esse quod gaudet[†]." There is the joy of the world nowhere more diffused than in roads that have lost faith; where, as say the old popular chants, are feasts to which men go singing, but from which they return weeping[‡]; where long grief, they add, succeeds to foolish pleasures[§]; where men may suffer less, but where their joy, as older poets say, is itself a misfortune.

ἧσσον μὲν ἀλγεῖ, δυστυχῶν δ' εὐδαιμονεῖ·[||]

where adversaries of the Holy Church, like the unblessed gentiles, have gatherings on the race-course and banquets in the booth, and as their poet said,—

"Vina diem celebrent; non festâ luce madere,
Est rubor, errantes et malè ferre pedes:"—

but their mirth is spiteful, and they—

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[*] Morris.

[†] D. Paulini Aquil. liber exhortat. ad Henricum ducem Forojulien. c. ii.

[‡] Merlin Barde Hersart de la Villemarque, chants populaires de la Bretagne.

[§] Submersion de la ville d'Is. ap. id.

[||] Eurip. Androm. 420.

"Laugh mornfully in those polluted halls."

"There is a certain apostate," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "given to intemperance, whom the dæmon has so well instructed in scurrility of words, that on account of the loquacity of his tongue, he used to be greatly acceptable to kings and princes. He was called Henry, surnamed Fig. He now follows the trade of an actor, and perhaps does worse than before *." Such are the sports of many now, at the bottom of whose heavy hearts is envy, of which old Rutebeuf says,

"Envie destruit gentillece
Envie grève, envie blece,
Envie confont charité—
Envie ocist humilité,
Tuit li mal vienent par envie."

They overflow with scoffs and satires, of which Lopez de Vega says, "that they do more harm to their authors than to those against whom they are directed—being an exercise of genius only fit for wicked men!" agreeing thus with Plato, who maintains that "the laws should permit no poet, or comedian, or versifier, to turn any citizen into ridicule, whether openly or under emblems, whether through anger or otherwise, and that the magistrates should banish from the state all infringers of this law †."

St. Anthony of Padua, after citing the words "Et deficiente vino," adds, "I wish there might be a failing to us of the wine of which we read, Fel draconum vinum eorum ‡, for that is the joy of the world §; that is the joy of those who traduce the Catholic Church, and who substitute the tyranny of the passions for the sweetness of the civilization which it produced; outdaring even poetry in this respect, that luxury is with them a virtue: for, as the Père le Moin remarks, "though poetry has ventured to raise monsters to heaven and to lodge Gods in hell, it has never had the courage yet to lead virtue to pleasure, has never dared to give to it the livery and the insignia of luxury ‖." The philosophy of the world has had this courage now, and therefore those who follow it receive within their walls what even gentiles, like Vitruvius, would exclude with the temples of Mars and Vulcan, and for the same reason that causes their removal from a Catholic city, "lest youth should be familiarized with impurity ¶." Yes, the desire of true joy can attract men to

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[*] Illust. Mir. lib. iv. 91. [†] De Legibus, lib. xi. [‡] Deut. xxxii.

[§] S. Antonii de Padua, Serm. Dom. ii. post Epiph.

[‖] Le Père le Moin, La dévotion aisée.

[¶] Vitruv. lib. i. c. 7.

the delights of Catholicity, which, as St. Augustin says, "has its good and holy pleasures; but these," says he, "are not in gold and silver, in feasts and luxury, in huntings and fishing, in plays and jokes, in theatrical vanities, and in ruinous honours;—narraverunt mihi injusti delectationes, sed non sicut lex tua, Domine. For many relate many things, and many praise many things, unjust men, unjust things; and truly these unjust things have a certain delight, but not as thy law, O Lord. Let them pass on then to the sweetness of this law, and not remain in the delights of sinners *."

The principle of the Catholic joy then secures in the first place its intensity. If Socrates, seeking to determine by a calculation the degrees which separate the pleasure of the just from that of the unjust, could discover that the former was seven hundred and twenty-nine times greater than that of the latter, founding his calculation on a theorem of geometry †,—at what a prodigious result should we arrive, if we employed any adequate process of a similar kind to form an estimate of the supernatural delights of the Catholic faith? For, be it ever remembered, that from the mystic consolations of authority down to the sportful play of youth upon the steps of churches, "the fingers of the powers above do tune the harmony of this peace." The Catholic Church, it is true, directs her faithful people to a future not a temporal felicity; but while announcing the certainty of the former she invites them to rejoice even while passing to it, without waiting till all is ruined and repaired again; as in the Lenten hymn for lauds—

"Dies venit, dies tua,
In qua reflorent omnia:
Lætemur et nos in viam,
Tuâ reducti dexterâ."

And she even brings on that happy age invoked by poets, "When truth and love shall dwell below among the works and ways of men: which," as they add, with more exact precision than they suspect themselves, "in this world not power, but will alone is wanting to accomplish." The principle of this joy is therefore truth; and hence each member of the Catholic Church in proportion as he conforms to her law is glad, feeling in his heart an echo of the prophetic words, "We are happy, O Israel, because the things that are pleasing to God are made known to us ‡." He experiences a joy that knows no sorrow: "And I do feel," he says, "a mighty calmness creep over my heart, which can no longer borrow its hues from chance, and change dark

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* In Ps. xxxviii. † De Repub. lib. ix. ‡ Baruch iv.

children of to-morrow." Then follows proof of what an old English poet so beautifully delivers—

"There is a grave-faced folly; and verily a laughter-loving wisdom;
And what if surface judges account it vain frivolity?
For merriment is often as a froth, that mantleth on the strong mind:
And well is the loveliness of wisdom mirror'd in a cheerful countenance,
For that a true philosophy commandeth an innocent life,
And the unguilty spirit is lighter than a linnet's heart;
Yea, there is no cosmetic like a holy conscience;
The eye is bright with trust, the cheek bloom'd over with affection,
The brow unwrinkled with a care, and the lip triumphant in its gladness [*]."

Moreover, as an immediate consequence of truth, the unity of the Church supplies a principle to explain the happy spirit of such favoured lands; for, as the Père Cahier observes, "the best remedy for the inequalities of the human condition is, that certain union of hearts, of which the secret is not found in the social theories." It is an ancient saying, "Strong friendship requires a similar will and the same antipathies." On this principle it is evident that the happiest societies, because the most loving and united, are not those in which men jostle and oppose each other with the least ceremony; but those in which hearts have the least divergence and the most points of union. The collective passions establish between men the sole level which is not a delusion or a disorder, because they place souls in contact independently of exterior forms [†]. Love is another divine source of joy in a nation that has faith; for, as Dante sings,—

"The sempiternal effluence streams abroad,
Spreading, wherever charity extends [‡]."

Cassiodorus says, "that charity is a perfect sabbath and the true rest of the human mind [§]." Dom John de Palafox supplies an instance, where he says that "there is nothing so agreeable, and easy, and convenient, as to pardon; as there is nothing so disagreeable and so difficult as to nourish anger and take revenge [||]." "The Catholic Church, following her Divine Founder," as Savonarola says, "wishes that we should be angry with no one, that we should reproach no one, that we should envy no one [¶]." The light of joy, then, all those who truly adhere to her can say,

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[*] Martin Tupper.

[†] Les PP. Martin et Cahier, Monographie de Bourges, 154.

[‡] Purg. 15.

[§] Lib. de Amic.

[||] Œuvres spirituelles.

[¶] Savonar. Orationis Dom. Explanat.

in the words of one whom Dante met in brief refining flames, "may not long be taken from mine eyes, for they have not offended grievously with envious glances*." "Besides," as the same poet says, "charity to any wish, by justice introduced, bars not the door†." Therefore what the philosopher of old said of sages, who, as the friends of God, must possess all things that belong to Him; all things being in common between friends, is eminently true of Catholic Christians. A consideration of the joy which springs thus from the essence of religion, fills with rapture the devout mind. "Amor per se sufficit," says St. Bonaventura, "is per se placet, et propter se. Ipse meritum, ipse præmium est sibi. Magna res amor‡." "All that our Lord God asks from us is love," says St. Thomas of Villanova. "What can be more gracious or benign? Who could have conceived such goodness? For what more pleasant, what sweeter, what more delightful than to love? for love is the life of the heart. O ineffable munificence! Love itself is a great reward, and for that reward thou rewardest! Thou givest love, and for love thou givest Paradise! Thou givest because thou hast given! for when thou rewardest our merits, what else dost thou but remunerate thy own gifts? since all our merit is thy gift§." And again he says, "Perfection is charity, which is perfect joy; for this is the exclusive privilege of charity, that it should be most good and also most delightful. Every other virtue has a pain annexed to it: but what labour or difficulty can there be in love? Let this consideration then move you, if nothing else can. Who does not wish to live pleasantly, delightfully, and to pass his days in joy? This he cannot do without fraternity and concord ||." But where is the centre of true fraternity and concord if it be not in the Catholic Church? Can it be with the many-headed multitude that rejects its authority, where, if all their wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south; and their consent of one direct way would be at once to all the points of the compass? The false pretensions to fraternity and concord, which are made without the pale of Catholicity, as also the melancholy and discouragement arising from that suspicious turn of mind which Protestantism generates, send us therefore through a mere desire of joy to the Catholic rule, which says, Love fraternity; and again with our great poet, "Be cheerful, and think of each thing well."

Moreover, by its moral doctrine, the Catholic religion conduces

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* Purg. 13. † Par. 3.

‡ S. Bon. Amatorium.

§ Dom. xvii. post Pent. Serm. i.

|| Id. de fœdere Princ. Christ.

to the joy of the present life. "Mihi crede," said even one Gentile philosopher, "res severa est verum gaudium *." "No one," says another, "rejects pleasure because it is pleasure, but because great pains follow it when it does not follow reason †." "We accuse," adds Cicero, "and think them worthy of hatred, who, corrupted by the blandishments of present pleasure, do not foresee through the blindness of cupidity the griefs which must follow it ‡." It is only on the same ground that Catholicism wages war against what is denominated pleasure: "and if," as Seneca says, "the mind to be joyful ought to be active and confident and raised above all things," then, indeed, to the Catholic faith we must turn for the most efficacious source of intellectual vigour, of hope, and of blissful elevation.

The joy of a Catholic people has another deep and productive root in the humility inspired by its religion. Hence a poet of the middle ages, expressing this in allegory, says, "On your right hand on the way of Paradise, towards the East, you will see a smiling house where dwelleth Humilitez la débonère §." Whereever humility is found, mirth will be seen attending it, and that which even Milton for once invokes, in the familiar lines—

"Jest and youthful jollity,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with joy, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
These delights 'tis thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live."

In the Catholic population are no supercilious pretensions, it is true. "I have nothing but gaiety," says Pedro, its representative in the play of Calderon; "as a generous man, I must spend what I have ||." Here is no philosophic boasting, like that which mutters—

"But he is weak, both man and boy
Hath been an idler in the land;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand;"

in accordance with the absurd complaint of Seneca, who declares that "the things in which the vulgar take delight want a foundation ¶." But the spectacle of this joy dispenses truly wise men from answering the insinuations of those who condemn it, and St. Augustin felt that it did so; for he relates that one day when about to recite a panegyric on the emperor, as his whole mind was oppressed with anxious solicitude, he perceived a poor

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* Seneca.

† Cicero de Finibus, i. 10.

‡ Id. i. 33.

§ Rutebœuf.

|| Louis Perez de Galicia.

¶ Epist. 23.

beggar in a street of Milan, gay and full of jollity, and that he turned to his friends who were with him and said, "What a contrast between the sorrows of my insane ambition, and the security, joy, and freedom of mind evinced by the beggar *!" Whatever may be thought of the particular case which elicited this remark from the great Augustin, there is assuredly nothing to disdain in the joyous spirit of people Catholically formed, where every one might say in the words of the sonnet, which in Italy was so familiar to the poor, that he had found the true pleasure which realized the promises of faith—that at nones and vespers, at matins and the angelus, he found those images which console and impart benediction shining peaceably in his heart †. It is not however to analyse, but, simply in their outward form, to observe the joys imparted by the Catholic faith that we pursue this path; and therefore, waving further inquiries as to their causes, let us proceed, casting a look from side to side, and witness the effects which can attract spirits thus directed by the law of affinity to their centre, where is found the object that impels their steps. "Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her, that you may suck and be filled with the breasts of her consolations—that you may milk out and flow with delights from the abundance of her glory ‡." Such are the words in which the joy of a Catholic people is predicted in the book of God; and the more we observe the spiritual and moral results of faith, of the church, of the sacraments, of the festivals, and of the popular traditions and manners connected with them, the more we shall feel how exactly and abundantly they have been fulfilled.

Joy, it must be observed, is not an accessary to the Catholic festival. It forms part of its essence, since He who governs each is expressly called the Paraclete, as St. Isidore says, "Quia magnam lætitiam sentit, qui aliquid revelante spiritu dicit §." And the divine voice had even proclaimed that, on days set apart for the worship of God, the whole external life was to show forth analogous effects. "Thou shalt make merry in thy festival time," were the words then, "thy son and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant, the Levite also and the stranger, and the fatherless and the widow that are within thy gates ||." Again we read that Nehemias and Esdras, the priest and scribe, and the Levites who interpreted to all the people, said, "This is a holy day to the Lord our God. Do not mourn nor weep. Go, eat fat meat, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord; and be not sad, for the joy of the Lord is

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* Confess. vi. 6.

† Petrarch. Son.

‡ Isai. lxvi.

§ De Sum. Bon. lib. i. c. 17.

|| Deut. xvi.

our strength. And the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy and be not sorrowful. So all the people went to eat and drink, and to send portions and to make great mirth; because they understood the words that he had taught them *." And elsewhere we read that when there was a festival of the Lord, a good dinner was prepared in Tobias's house, and he said to his son, " Go and bring some of our tribe that fear God, to feast with us †,"—words, we may remark, in passing, that seem less in accordance with those who would denounce as sinful all conviviality, but that around tea-kettles, which recals the feast of pots, in gentile usage, than with the ancient chorus that exclaims,—

——— ὦ μελέα ψυχά,
ὃς μηδ' οἰνοχύτου πώματος ἥσθη δεκέτη χρόνον ‡.

Scriptural, therefore, is the Catholic custom described in the old Christmas Carol.—

" Conditor le jour de Nouel
Fist ung bancquet le nompareil,
Et si le fit à tous venans—Nouel.
Il y avoit perdris, faisans,
Oyseulx saulvaiges, des hairons,
Pour toutes manières de gens—Nouel §."

Again; the Bible, which was the source of all the old Catholic observances, relates, that " the people rejoiced when they promised their offerings willingly; because they offered them to the Lord with all their heart; and that David the king rejoiced also with a great joy ||." The joy of a Catholic population, on religious holydays, is therefore just, and conformable to the revealed will which makes just what is just; and the exclamation of the Abbot Rupert, alluding to a like spirit in the Jews of old, when they decreed that the recovery of the place in which the name of God was invoked, should be celebrated with such joy during eight days every year, as Josephus records, may be repeated, in allusion to each festival of the Church, with its octave. " Who," he asks, " but great God himself could have infused such a love of his name into their minds as to make them so constant and devout in celebrating it ¶?" The austerest orders of religion understood the obligation, and therefore in the Regula Orientalis, and in the rule of St. Pachomius, we find this prohibition— " Ne lugeat in die festo Domini Salvatoris **;" and in the rule

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[*] 2 Esdras 8.

[†] Tobias 2.

[‡] Phil. 715.

[§] Lucas le Moigne.

[||] 1 Paralip. 29.

[¶] Rupert. Abb. De victoria verbi Dei, lib. x. c. 3.

[**] Reg. Or. xvii.; Reg. S. Pach. clix.

of St. Isidore the reason of never fasting on the Sunday is thus given—“Propter resurrectionis Christi lætitiam *.” Indeed, of the joyful celebration of Sunday, Epiphanius says, “Dominicas omnes festas hilaresque Catholica esse sanxit Ecclesia †.” The Church prays that her faithful may be joyous on all her festivals; as, for instance, on the vigil of the Assumption, saying, “Da, quæsumus, ut sua nos defensione munitos, jucundos facias suæ interesse festivitati.” The popular too, as well as the ecclesiastical mind, prescribed joy upon the festivals, as in these verses of the old mystery—

“Congaudeat Ecclesia
Pro hæc sacra solempnia,
Et gaudet cum læticia,
Læta ducat tripudia;
Ergo gaude gaudio,
Juvenilis contio ‡.”

But would you now mark the practical result of these principles? Then only look around you, and say, can there, for instance, be a more joyful spectacle in the world than that of a town or village through which God passes in the Eucharist? The French call it the festival of God. Certainly the felicity that encompasses, as an atmosphere, that population, seeming to rest with each house, as the source diffusing it moves on, is supernatural, and immediately from heaven. But hear the traveller's testimony on a common occasion. “Approaching the walls of the town,” says Landor, “the whole country was pervaded by a stirring and diversifying air of gladness. Laughter and songs and flutes and viols, inviting voices, and complying responses, mingled with merry bells and with processional hymns, along the woodland paths and along the yellow meadows. It was really the Lord's day; for He made his creatures happy in it, and their hearts were thankful.” Every one will feel the beauty of his observation who has witnessed scenes like this in Italy or the South of France. The climate is delicate; the air most sweet; fertile the land; the temple much surpassing common praise.

“Lætitiâ, ludisque viæ plausuque fremebant §.”

The rustic hamlet, with its small humble church, has the same spectacle and the same, if not even greater, transports. Therefore the poet who sings the young peasant transported to the

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* Reg. S. Isidori, cap. xi.
† Lib. de exposit. fidei.
‡ Mystères du moyen âge—Monmerque et Michel.
§ Æn. viii. 715.

capital from the mountains where he was born, represents him expostulating with his rich patron thus—

"En vain l'étude a poli mon langage ;
Vos arts en vain ont ébloui mes yeux :
Ah, rendez-moi, rendez-moi mon village,
Et ses dimanches si joyeux !"

This stream of a glad people and these voices, "fearless, frank, and jocund," as Dante says, "with all this laughter, on the bloomy shores, are but a preface, shadowy of the truth they emblem * ;" for this is not mere Virgilian joy—"Erat autem populus jucundus secundum faciem sanctorum †." Such is the Catholic festival, ever changing with the season, and with its varying beauty curing in men thoughts that would thick their blood. So St. Peter Damian says of the multitude celebrating the anniversary of St. Nicholas—"Lætantur pueri, juvenes congratulantur, ornantur virgines, senes exhilarantur, et omnis ætas personaliter alludit. Unusquisque autem habet materiam gaudiorum : for boys may praise the pious boy, youths the generous youth, old men Him who succoured the poverty of the aged." Similarly St. Paulinus, describing the festival of St. Felix, at Nola, dwells chiefly on the sanctified rejoicing of the people, directed to the face of Christ—

"Nam cui fas hominum, cui Christus amorque, timorque
Non gaudere hodie ?————
Cernite lætitiam mundi in splendore diei
Elucere sacris insignibus ————
———— mistæ inter gaudia cunctis
Prosiliunt lacrymæ ————
Alma dies magnis celebratur cœtibus, oræ
Gaudent terrarum, et ridere videtur apertis
Æthra polis : ————
Nos quoque felices, quibus istum cernere coram,
Et celebrare diem datur, et spectare Patroni
Præmia ; præstantique suis tam grandia Christo
Gratari et lætos inter gaudere tumultus."

Again, of the same day, even in time of war, this holy poet sings thus :—

"Sed tamen ista dies licet inter prælia, nobis
Lætitiæ pacisque dies erit ; horrida longè
Bella fremant ; nostris pax libera mentibus adsit.
Lætitiæ dulcem non obliviscitur usum,
Mens adsueta piis sua solvere pectora votis,
Et domino festis caste gaudere diebus.

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* Par. iii. 30.

† Judith 16.

Quare importunam, quamvis sub tempore mœsto
Pellite tristitiam ; bona gaudia, dulcia verba,
Omne pium lætumque die Felicis amemus *."

The absence of dispute and controversy, on occasions of a Catholic festival, points significantly to the truth of these great principles of authority emanating from the Church, without which every celebration would witness a fresh calling in question of each article of faith, whereby the joy and peace of the devout multitude would be disturbed, and such a state of things as we have been describing rendered impossible. Catholicity seems to prompt a general sentiment like that expressed by the ancient poet—

εὔφημον ἦμαρ οὐ πρέπει κακαγγέλῳ
γλώσσῃ μιαίνειν †.

There may be no definitions or apologies, no studied deprecatory oration, but there doth appear among the buzzing pleased multitude that confusion in the powers which succeeds the hearing of some noble theme, when every something being blent together turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy, expressed and not expressed. Hymns, processions, music, such are the expressions of the glad heart; and alluding to the joy which these inspire, St. Thomas of Villanova says, " If in this life we receive such exquisite delight from the sound of human voices, or chords and organs, what effect will be produced by that celestial music formed by angelic ministration, the more delicious as being more interior ‡!" Nor is this all. " The Church," as a learned antiquary remarks, " in her joy allowed a certain latitude for play to her numerous youth. Her scholares, parvuli chorules, infantes ecclesiæ, whose occupations were in general so grave, might reasonably require occasional intervals of recreation ; and we might well be spared those dismal homilies of modern authors respecting profanation of holy places §. In general, towards all the people the Church acts as a sweet, tender, loving mother, and therefore sanctions their innocent and respectful play around her. She would have been a severe mother if she had wished constantly to impose silence on the infantine gaiety of the believing population ‖. While the Gentile manners still reigned around her, great restraints were necessary. The games and dramatic representations being an occasion of peril, were prohibited, at least on religious days. In 417, the Council of Africa condemned the practice of theatrical plays on Sunday. They

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* D. Paulini op.

† Æsch. Agam. 636.

‡ St. Thom. a Vill. De Div. Mich. i.

§ Les PP. Martin et Cahier, Monographie de Bourges.

‖ Id. 141.

were prohibited at Constantinople also, as were horse-races, on Sundays and festivals. If the birth-day of the emperor fell on a Sunday, the spectacles were put off to the next day. Whoever was present at a play on Sunday was cashiered, and his goods confiscated *; but the Church and the Catholic multitude were not slow to make provision to enable Christians, in allusion to the least details of life, to repeat the saying of Tertullian—"Voluptates non perdimus, sed mutamus." Hence, while many Pagan actors were being honoured as martyrs, as St. Corneillus, St. Genes, St. Pelagius, St. Porphyrus, St. Sylvain, St. Ardalion, and St. Gelasius, indicating the end of ancient delights, a new dramatic muse rose up in harmony with truth and love, and in no respect more different from that of later times than in the remarkable joyfulness of its character. No melancholy complaint or profound discouragement can be found in the theatrical compositions which were intended for a Catholic population. Witness the religious dramas of Calderon. As a late critic observes of that great poet, "He fears nothing; he has no doubts; there is always over his head a heaven opened, angels who chant, and a sun of love and glory which is awaiting the elect †." Everywhere it was the same.

"London," says Fitzstephen, "for the shows upon theatres and comical pastimes, hath holy plays, representations of miracles, which holy confessors have wrought, or representations of torments, wherein the constancy of martyrs appeared." William of Paris therefore distinguishes, in reply to the question, whether alms are to be given to players, saying, "Sometimes it is lawful, and sometimes not. Since play is necessary to the preservation of human life, because there is rest in play, and a certain solace to human nature, and therefore, according to the philosopher and Tully, it is virtuous to indulge in honest play in fitting seasons. Therefore to players, for the recreation of men at proper times, it is lawful to give pay for their pains, and alms; but to actors who use indecorous words it is not lawful to give any thing—Quia eorum dicta vel facta sunt magis ad confusionem quam ad consolationem. Ideo qui talibus donat, peccat: quia eos fovet et sustinet in peccatis ‡." "It is, in short," says Cardinal Palæotus, citing St. Thomas §, "the approved sentence of all holy doctors, that the nature of man requires relaxation and intervals of rest ||." The desire of popular recreation, therefore, may be said to point to the Catholic Church, which sanctions,

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* Thomassin, Traité des Jeunes, ii. 25.

† Phil. Chasles, Etudes sur l'Espagne.

‡ Guill. Paris. De Sacramentis, 63.

§ 2. 2. Φ. 148. art. 2 and 3.

|| De imaginibus sacris, &c. lib. ii. c. 31.

promotes, and sanctifies it, even the most austere saints actually prescribing its imitation to the perfect, as where St. Bridget says, "After supper there may be honest joy and recreation,—quia si arcus nimis extenditur citius frangitur. Ideo moderata lætitia propter infirmitatem carnis placet Deo *." But let us now observe more in detail the character of devout joy and of mirthful leisure which distinguishes the Catholic state. In the spirit of the old religion the great poet, who witnessed its removal from England, cried lamentingly—

> "Sweet recreation barr'd, what doth ensue
> But moody and dull melancholy,
> Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair?"

Recreation indeed of some sort was retained; but of what kind? Precisely that which in Catholic ages had been denounced with such vehemence, that we, at this distance of time, may feel surprised at the severity of judgment passed upon it: as when we read in the Jardin des Nobles these words, "Et sont ces jongleurs en trois manières: les aulcuns transforment ou transfigurent leur corps en faisant laides contenances et manières; et ceulx-ci sont en estat de damnacion. Aucuns sont vagues, et vont par les cours des grans seigneurs, et flatent les presens, et lardent et diffament les absens; avec ceulx-ci on ne doit converser né boire né menger, et sont en estat de damnacion. Aulcuns sont qui vont par les hostelries flastant et jouant des instruments de musique, et chantent chansons de luxure et de ordure pour provoquer les hommes à dissolucion; et ceulx-ci sont en voye de damnacion †." The great saint, Urseolo I. Doge of Venice, before retiring into the cloister of Catalonia, dividing his property into three portions, of which one was for his family, and another for the poor, dedicated the third for public diversions ‡. The general recognition of the need for public amusement, and the results, imparted an aspect to the city in which faith prevailed, that cannot fail to strike the attention of observers. "Let us now," saith Fitzstephen, "come to the sports and pastimes of old time used in this city of London, seeing it is fit that a city should not only be commodious and serious, but also merry and sportful." He then describes a city in the time of St. Thomas of Canterbury, which no one could recognise as being the same which now stretches its interminable length along the Thames, "built nobly, pure the air, hospitable in her sweet recess, city or suburban, having studious walks and shades, breathing the smell of field and grove, and clement air;" adding

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* Revelationum S. Birgittæ lib. iv. c. 126.

† Jardin des Nobles.

‡ Vallery, Curiosités et Anecdotes Italiens.

this comment, "Ibi siquidem emollit animos hominum clementia cœli, non ut sint in venerem putres, sed ne feri sint et bestiales, potius benigni et liberales."

Concerning the estate of the suburbs of this city, in the reign of Henry II., Fitzstephen hath these words:—"Upwards, on the west, is the king's palace, which is an incomparable building, rising with a vawmure and bulwark aloft upon the river, two miles from the wall of the city, but yet conjoined with a continual suburb. On all sides, without the houses of the suburbs, are the citizens' gardens and orchards, planted with trees, both large, sightly, and adjoining together. On the north side are pastures and plain meadows, with brooks running through them, turning water-mills with a pleasant noise. Not far off is a great forest, a well-wooded chase, having good covert for harts, bucks, does, boars, and wild bulls. There are near London, on the north side, especial wells in the suburbs, sweet, wholesome, and clear. Amongst which, Holywell, Clarkenwell, and St. Clement's well, are most famous, and most frequented by scholars and youths of the city in summer evenings, when they walk forth to take the air, in watching the clear water mid glistening pebbles gliding playfully." That the aspect of the city changed with the establishing of a new philosophy of life, subversive of Catholicity, is noted by the contemporary writers. "For now," says Stowe, who records however that Henry VIII. had built a cockpit at White Hall, which the Earl of Kent had given to the black friars, "concerning the inclosures of common grounds about this city, whereof I mind not much to argue, Edward Hall setteth down a note. The inhabitants of the towns about London, as Iseldon, Hoxton, Shoreditch, and others, had so inclosed the common fields with hedges and ditches, that neither the young men of the city might shoot, nor the ancient persons walk for their pleasures in those fields, but that either their bows and arrows were taken away or broken, or the honest persons arrested or indicted; saying, 'that no Londoner ought to go out of the city, but in the highways.' This saying so grieved the Londoners, that suddenly this year a great number of the city assembled themselves in a morning, and a turner, in a fool's coat, came crying through the city, 'Shovels and spades! shovels and spades!' so many of the people followed, that it was a wonder to behold; and within a short space all the hedges about the city were cast down, and the ditches filled up, and every thing made plain, such was the diligence of these workmen. These fields were never hedged, but now we see the thing in worse case than ever, by means of inclosure for gardens, wherein are built many fair summer-houses; and, as in other places of the suburbs, some of them like Midsummer pageants, with towers, turrets, and chimney-tops, not so much

for use of profit as for show and pleasure, betraying the vanity of men's minds, much unlike to the disposition of the ancient citizens, who delighted in the building of hospitals and almshouses for the poor, and therein both employed their wits, and spent their wealths in preferment of the common commodity of this our city." Stowe remarks also sorrowfully, "that a certain lane without Bishopsgate, within forty years, had on both sides fair hedge rows of elm-trees, with bridges and easy stiles to pass over into the pleasant fields, very commodious for citizens therein to walk, shoot, and otherwise to recreate and refresh their dull spirits in the sweet and wholesome air, which is now, within a few years, made a continual building. What should I speak of the ancient daily exercises in the long bow by citizens of this city, now almost clean left off and forsaken?—I overpass it; for by the mean of closing in the common grounds, our archers, for want of room to shoot abroad, creep into bowling alleys, and ordinary dicing houses, nearer home, where they have room enough to hazard their money at unlawful games; and there I leave them to take their pleasures." It is remarkable that the evil he complains of went on increasing till quite lately, when the pressure of necessity, and a close intercourse with Catholic nations, have compelled, through policy and shame, men of power to adopt more Catholic views of their duty towards the people and the poor.

But to return to the Catholic city, which knew not, as Stowe remarks, "the purprestures or encroachments on the highways, lanes, and common grounds in and about it," and observe the popular amusements on days of recreation

"Une fois en l'an chevauche le huan,

said the old French proverb. The owl's allowance was not deemed sufficient formerly for boys or men. The Catholic religion makes light hearts—buoyant elastic hearts. Observe them even in times of calamity. Mabillon seemed to lament on seeing sports after night prayers in a village of Germany, during the siege of Vienna by the Turks; but these poor people, without having heard Calderon, knew from faith that whatever the Spanish proverb might affirm, "The worst is not always certain:" and did not the event prove that they were right, standing in the smile of Heaven? To London however as it was in Catholic times let us confine our view. "To begin," says Fitzstephen "with the sports of the boys, for we have all been boys, every year at Shrovetide, after dinner, all the youths go into the fields to play at the ball. The scholars of every school have their ball, or baston, in their hands; the ancient and wealthy men of the city come forth on horseback to see the sport of the young men, and to take part of the pleasure in beholding their

agility. On certain days in Lent a fresh company of young men comes into the field on horseback, and the best horseman conducteth the rest. Then march forth the citizens' sons, and other young men, with disarmed lances and shields, and there they practise feats of war. On the days of foot-ball the scholars belonging to the several schools have each their ball; and the city tradesmen, according to their respective crafts, have theirs. The more aged men, the fathers of the players, and the wealthy citizens, come on horseback to see the contests of the young men, with whom, after their manner, they participate; their natural heat seeming to be aroused by the sight of so much agility, and by their participation in the amusements of unrestrained youth. After dinner, a company of young men enter the fields, mounted on warlike horses, always foremost in the race, each steed well-trained to gallop in a ring. The lay-sons of the citizens rush out. The hope of victory animates every one. The spirited horses neigh, their limbs tremble, they champ their bits, and, impatient of delay, cannot endure standing still. When at length the charger's hoof seizes upon the course, the young riders having been divided into companies, some pursue those that go before without being able to overtake them, whilst others throw their companions out of their course, and gallop beyond them. In the Easter holidays they play at a game resembling a naval engagement. A target is firmly fastened to the trunk of a tree which is fixed in the middle of the river; and in the prow of a boat, driven along by oars and the current, stands a young man who is to strike the target with his lance; if, in hitting it, he break his lance, and keep his position unmoved, he gains his point, and attains his desire: but if his lance be not shivered by the blow, he is tumbled into the river, and his boat passes by, driven along by its own motion. Two boats, however, are placed there, one on each side of the target, and in them a number of young men to take up the striker, when he first emerges from the stream, or when a second time he rises from the wave. On the bridge, and in balconies on the banks of the river, stand the spectators, well disposed to laugh—

'Multum ridere parati.'

Accidents sometimes happen, it is true: but youth is an age eager for glory and desirous of victory, and so young men engage in counterfeit battles, that they may conduct themselves more valiantly in real ones." In general, however, the joy of a Catholic population partakes more of the peaceful spirit of the old Platonic wisdom, than is accordant with the mere martial amusement of a warlike nation. "Young men," says Plato, "when full of joy are always ready for the dance—χορεύειν ἕτοιμοι.

And man alone, of all animals, has the sense of measure which serves to invent dancing *." Plato derives *χορός*, the choir, from *χαρά*, joy: he even says that good education consists in knowing how to sing and to dance well—*ὁ καλῶς ἄρα πεπαιδευμένος ᾄδειν τε καὶ ὀρχεῖσθαι δυνατὸς ἂν εἴη καλῶς* †. The people under the Catholic civilization have their dance in tinsel-slipper'd feet, by all practised and by all approved; for it resembles not the shameful and burlesque forms which formerly were reserved to slaves in Sparta, who were constrained to practise them in order to fill the ingenuous with disgust:—

"'Tis evening: Labour ceases from his toil;
And from each portal issues forth a train
Of youthful forms with hands link'd close, and brows
All garlanded with flowers; their dancing feet
Bound lightly o'er the violet buds, that lie
Like thick strewn gems around them; and their sweet
Clear voices pierce the air, and rise to heaven
With angel merriment." ———

The Catholic poet, like Dante, conversant with the people's play, will even be led from it to suppose that angels dance, and that the circling melody goes round in heaven; for the Church, where manners are conformable to faith, permits on earth the dance to her children and the song. So we hear sung—

"Still round, and round, and round,
Let us compass the ground.
Since our hearts are so light, that all weigh'd together,
Agree to a grain, and they weigh not a feather,
Lovest thou music?
Oh, 'tis sweet!
What's dancing?
E'en the mirth of feet."

"In the holydays," says Stowe, "all the summer the youths are exercised in leaping, dancing, shooting, wrestling, casting the stone, and practising their shields; the maidens trip in their timbrels, and dance as long as they can well see. The youths of this city also have used on holydays after evening prayer, at their masters' doors, to exercise their wasters and bucklers; and the maidens, one of them playing on a timbrel, in sight of their masters and dames, to dance for garlands hung athwart the streets; which open pastimes in my youth being now suppressed, worse practices within doors are to be feared." He might well say so. "The Catholic Church, following the custom of the people of God of old, does not suffer the world to engross to itself all the expressions of mirth and festivity. Now," says an

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* De Legibus, ii.

† Id. ii.

English writer, "they have left nothing of that kind to religion, which must sit by in gloomy solemnity, and see the world, with the flesh and the devil, assume to themselves the sole power of distributing social happiness *." The song, too, by Catholicism is permitted, elevated, sanctified. It is the occasion of high lessons imparted in all the sweetness of an indulgent parent. St. Augustin prescribes singing. "Travellers do this," he says, "for the solace of their labour. Sing you also in this life, I beseech you, by this way, sing on this way, sing the new song. Let no one there sing old things. Sing love songs to your country; for the new way and new traveller there is a new song. Hear the Apostle exhorting you to sing the new song,—'Si qua igitur in Christo nova creatura, vetera transierunt, ecce nova facta sunt.' Sing the new song therefore by the way which you have known on earth †. The lust of the flesh sings the old song, the charity of God sings the new. It is better that you be silent as the new than that you should sing as the old man; for if the new man, even though silent, your heart will sing the new song, since love itself is a voice ‡. That is, the voice which, in the rejoicing of a Catholic people, is heard. Theirs is the new song, that of charity, and therefore does it sound so strange to antiquaries now, when they compare it with the melodies of the Gentiles who have come back to life around them.

But here, perhaps, we shall hear objected the barbarous combats with the bull in Spain, which seem to cast an indelible reproach on the very spirit of joy which reigns in a Catholic population—

> "Nonne vides ut Ibera paret gens fortia bello
> Pectora, taurorum cursus instructaque festas
> Prælia concelebrans, veteri de more, per urbes § ?"

If well directed, however, the very indignation which such spectacles ought to excite, can only serve to point still more clearly to the Catholic Church, which, after suppressing them in most countries, has condemned them where she could not succeed, as by the bull of St. Pius V., under the pain of excommunication and anathema. "Our nature," says a late historian, "is pleased with dangers, and seeks their attraction even where a noble reality is wanting. This native intrepidity, which when purified gives birth to heroes and martyrs, if abandoned to its own instincts, descends below the level of brutality, as the ancient and modern societies bear witness. The Church at last succeeded in abolishing the race of gladiators; but the pugilistic ring and

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* Cited by Southey.

† In Ps. lxvi.

‡ In Ps. xcv.

§ Prœd. Rust. xvi.

the bull-fight have held their ground *." The mystic voice of the holy recluses of Spain was heard with fearful eloquence denouncing the sin of the bull-fights, and calling upon the magistrates to prohibit them on the authority of God. In the year 1599, when the plague, after ravaging different cities of Spain, and among them Valledolid, ceased in the latter city, at the end of September, contrary to the prediction of the physicians, but according to what Marina de Escobar, who dwelt there, had pronounced, the joy of the people being ill-directed, gave occasion to this holy virgin for announcing to them the judgment of the Catholic religion respecting this barbarous amusement. "Unmindful of their duty, the people, in their exhilaration," she says, "resolved on having bull-fights, which the Divine Majesty regarded as eminently offensive and injurious, and a proof of great ingratitude, and a scandal to good men. Moreover, the Divine Majesty, grieving for the fragility and inadvertency of the governors of the people, which irritated his anger, indicated to me that I should tell my confessor, in His name, to admonish the judges and superiors of the city. I did immediately as I was ordered; and the fathers of the Society of Jesus discharged their office in like manner, as enjoined and commanded by God. They admonished the judges and rulers concerning this quarrel of God; but all these, and each of them, threw the blame off their own shoulders, alleging excuses which seemed to them sufficient; but God, who was offended at the deed, showing to me that He was not satisfied with their excuses, said to me, 'I will punish them for that exorbitant crime; and for punishment I will take away the persons who are necessary to their republic.' I felt vehemently the justice of what was said; but I was filled with dread, and I knew not what to reply. After a few months one of those who governed the city died, and within two years two others. The first died on the very day appointed for a bull-fight, which he lamented, complaining of the coincidence of his illness on such a day to his servants. The second died of melancholy on account of some things not succeeding as he desired. The third died before entering on an office to which he had just succeeded in getting himself appointed. But such I always remark is the result, and therefore I dread the consequences, when ordered to communicate the Divine will, if what is prescribed be not fulfilled; for I invariably see sinister results if the Divine injunction be not obeyed †." On another occasion she writes as follows:—"On Wednesday the 8th of July, hearing that on that day bull-fights were to be celebrated in Valladolid, I grieved bitterly that men should be intent on such

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* Le Vic^{t}. de Falloux, Hist. de S. Pie V., tom ii. 14.

† Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. v. c. 9, p. 1.

delights instead, as they ought, on doing penance for their sins. In a vision then I beheld our Lord, who said to me, with a grave countenance and a voice of authority which implied that He was about to disclose a great mystery, 'You also must behold the bulls.' Not understanding the words I was astonished, but presently, by the power of angels, I was transported to the open place near the convent of St. Francis, where I beheld on the roof many demons, who tore each other like enraged dogs. I thought I was lying on my bed surrounded and protected by angels. Then I saw come forth bulls and their drivers; and this latter seemed like the sport of children, the men being dwarfs and the bulls feeble; and then the men in the place were assailed by the demons as by ferocious bulls, though in the form of cruel men of gigantic stature, and they made a vast slaughter, and I was filled with grief, and raising my eyes to heaven, where I saw the celestial court enjoying its profound peace and immense glory, I exclaimed, 'O God of mercy!' meaning to invoke pity for the people, and I thought that God was deaf to my prayers, and a grave angel came forth and said, 'Why do you say, God of mercy? Cry, rather, God of justice and of vengeance!' and still I invoked my God as God of mercy, and I heard a voice saying, 'Hast thou not been admonished, and ordered to say, God of justice and of vengeance?' and I cried, 'O Jesu! Jesu! is it possible that this should be at Valladolid?' and then I understood that this vision was shown to me to prove how angry was God at the sins which men committed against his Divine Majesty, and how only by supplications could his hands be bound to prevent Him from taking vengeance,—and then the whole vision disappeared *."

But it was not alone from the bed of mystic recluses that such warning voices came in Spain. The clergy, and especially the friars, denounced the bull fights in the most emphatic language, as the Spanish literature attests; and the pontifical authority was in vain exerted to the same end. The great Archbishop of Valencia, St. Thomas of Villanova, spoke the sense of the Church when he exclaimed, "Oh! who will take away this bestial and diabolic custom of our Spain of baiting bulls? What more brutal than to stimulate a brute that it may tear men? O direful spectacle! O most cruel play! You see a Christian brother suddenly torne by a beast, and lose not alone the life of the body, but also that of the soul, for they commonly die in sin, and you are delighted and amused! How did the ancient doctors, Chrysostom, Augustin, Ambrose, and Jerome, labour to remove from the Church those atrocious and obscene and Pagan spectacles! They succeeded, and these were exploded

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. ii. c. 5, p. 2.

and driven from the whole Church, Spain alone observing this Pagan rite, and there is no one to reprove or prohibit? As for me, though I know it will be of no avail, I will do what I ought, and deliver my own soul. I proclaim to you, therefore, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all who assist at, or consent to, or do not prohibit, when they can, these spectacles, not alone sin mortally, but that they are murderers, and will have to render an account to God in the day of judgment for all the blood that is thus shed, and not only you, but all mere spectators, are in danger of incurring mortal sin*." Such is the view that the Catholic religion takes of these amusements, though, with shameless effrontery, its antagonists in England affirm, that "in Spain the Church of Rome marshalled into its own service a ceremonial at once profitable and popular, and consecrated butchery by wedding it to the altar, and that neither the cruelty nor profligacy of the bull-fight has ever roused the zeal of the most elect or most fanatic of the clergy of Spain†." But what is the view adopted by the adversaries of Catholicism respecting these heart-hardening spectacles? Are they unanimous in condemning them? Far otherwise. "To see a bull-fight," the same writer tells us, "has been the emphatic object of enlightened curiosity since Peninsular sketches have been taken and published by our travellers."

We have lived to see the material glory of the Spanish Church eclipsed, its temporal power shorne; and what has been the result in respect to the bull-fights, the same English guide tells us in these curious words:—"Nothing since the recent vast improvements in Spain has more progressed than the bull-fight—convents have come down, churches have been levelled, but new amphitheatres have arisen." In fact, never before were bull-fights so multiplied and extolled: even strangers to Spain, imbued with the modern philosophy, applaud them in their writings, and foreign princes, not content with applauding, send costly presents to reward the combatants. "It is said," says a recent traveller, "that civilization will cause the Spaniards to lose the taste for bull-fights. If it does so indeed, so much the worse for civilization, since a bull-fight is one of the grandest of all imaginable sights‡." Frivolous, then, is the objection founded on the continuance of bull-fights in Spain, which is in spite, not in consequence of, the religion that it professes.

But to return to London in the olden time. The moderns are greatly puzzled to reconcile recreation with devotion. One of them lately, describing a scene he witnessed at Albaro, near

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* S. Thom. a Vill. Serm. de S. Joan. Bapt. ii.

† Gatherings from Spain.

‡ Gautier, Voyage en Espagne.

Genoa, says, with a sort of blank amaze, "Some men were playing at bowls immediately outside the church. When half a dozen of them finished a game, they came into the aisle, crossed themselves with holy water, knelt on one knee for an instant, and walked off again to play another game." The same combination, however, prevailed formerly on each of their own village greens.

Fitzstephen says, "In the months of June and July, on the vigils of festival days, and on the same festival days in the evenings after the sun-setting, there were usually made bonfires in the streets, every man bestowing wood or labour towards them; the wealthier sort also, before their doors near to the said bonfires, would set out tables on the vigils, furnished with sweet bread and good drink, and on the festival days with meats and drinks plentifully, whereunto they would invite their neighbours and passengers also to sit and be merry with them in great familiarity, praising God for his benefits bestowed on them. These were called bonfires as well of good amity amongst neighbours that being before, at controversy, were there, by the labour of others, reconciled, and made of bitter enemies loving friends; and also for the virtue that a great fire hath to purge the infection of the air. On the vigil of St. John the Baptist, and on St. Peter and Paul the apostles, every man's door being shadowed with green birch, long fennel, St. John's wort, orpin, white lilies, and such like, garnished upon with garlands of beautiful flowers, had also lamps of glass, with oil burning in them all the night; some hung out branches of iron curiously wrought, containing hundreds of lamps alight at once, which made a goodly show, namely in New Fish-street, Thames-street, &c. From alhallon eve till the morrow after the feast of the purification, there is playing at cards in every house more for pastime than for gain." The latter indeed was altogether excluded. "Such play is prohibited," says William of Paris, "therefore he who wins cannot retain, nor ought he who loses receive—but all is to be given in alms *."

At Christmas every man's house as also the churches were decked with holm, ivy, bays, and whatever else was green; the conduits and standards in the streets being likewise garnished. Public shows then united high and low in common gladness. An instance occurring in the year 1377 is thus related:—"This was made by the citizens for disport of the young prince, Richard, son to the Black Prince, in the feast of Christmas:—On the Sunday before Candlemas, in the night, one hundred and thirty citizens, disguised, and well horsed, in a mummery, with sound of trumpets, sackbuts, cornets, shalmes, and other minstrels, and

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* Guill. Paris, De Sacramentis, 63.

innumerable torch lights of wax, rode from Newgate, through Cheape, over the bridge, through Southwarke, and so to Kennington beside Lambhith, where the young prince remained with his mother and the Duke of Lancaster his uncle, the Earls of Cambridge, Hertford, Warwicke, and Suffolke, with divers other lords. In the first rank did ride forty-eight in the likeness and habit of esquires, two and two together, clothed in red coats and gowns of say or sandal, with comely visors on their faces; after them came riding forty-eight knights in the same livery of colour and stuff; then followed one richly arrayed like an emperor; and after him some distance, one stately attired like a pope, whom followed twenty-four cardinals, and after them eight or ten with black visors, not amiable, as if they had been legates from some foreign princes. These maskers, after they had entered Kenington, alighted from their horses, and entered the hall on foot; which done, the prince, his mother, and the lords, came out of the chamber into the hall, whom the said mummers did salute, showing by a pair of dice upon the table their desire to play with the prince, which they so handled that the prince did always win when he cast them. Then the mummers set to the prince three jewels, one after another, which were a bowl of gold, a cup of gold, and a ring of gold, which the prince won at three casts. Then they set to the prince's mother, the duke, the earls, and other lords, to every one a ring of gold, which they did also win. After which they were feasted, and the music sounded, the prince and lords danced on the one part with the mummers, which did also dance; which jollity being ended, they were again made to drink, and then departed in order as they came."

It may be noted that the old writers, describing public diversions, disdain to record what now is held of main importance. Matthieu Paris declines specifying the dishes on an occasion of this kind; and Marineus Siculus, writing to John Velascus, describing an entertainment at Burgos by the Infant of Spain, says, "Non scribo fercula et varia ciborum genera, ne nimis obsoniis delectatus fuisse videar *."

But the spring returns. As Charles of Orleans says,

> "Chascun s'abille de nouveau,
> Le temps a laissié son manteau."

Then says Stowe, "In the month of May, namely, on May-day in the morning, every man, except impediment, would walk into the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds, praising God in their kind; and for example

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* Epist.

hereof, Edward Hall hath noted, that King Henry VIII., as in the 3d of his reign, and divers other years, so namely, in the 7th of his reign, on May-day in the morning, with Queen Katherine his wife, accompanied with many lords and ladies, rode a-maying from Greenwitch to the high ground of Shooter's hill, where, as they passed by the way, they espied a company of tall yeomen, clothed all in green, with green hoods, and bows and arrows, to the number of two hundred; one being their chieftain, was called Robin Hoode, who required the king and his company to stay and see his men shoot; whereunto the king granting, Robin Hoode whistled, and all the two hundred archers shot off, loosing all at once; and when he whistled again, they likewise shot again; their arrows whistled by craft of the head, so that the noise was strange and loud, which greatly delighted the king, queen, and their company. Moreover, this Robin Hoode desired the king and queen, with their retinue, to enter the green wood, where, in harbours made of boughs, and decked with flowers, they were set and served plentifully with venison and wine by Robin Hoode and his men, to their great contentment, and had other pageants and pastimes, as ye may read in my said author."

But we have delayed here already too long, since my theme is not merely like that of Aristippus, who wrote on the delights of the ancients. If we were to adopt Plato's suggestion, and suppose that games should be proposed at which all the citizens should assemble to contend for the prize, and that he who should most contribute to the general joy—μάλιστα χαίρειν ποιοῦντα—should be declared victor*, supposing them to be so classed that each should represent some one of the different systems of moral governments that exist in the world, then assuredly would he who personified the Catholic religion be pronounced the conqueror, and in a most eminent degree entitled to receive the crown; for it is the Church alone that can secure joy to a population—that can leave festivals and pastimes to the people, and not hopeless miseries.

"If," says the Père Cahier, "you will cry out idleness, I have no wish to dispute about words. It is certain that labour was not in the middle ages considered the end and sole business of life. It was thought that man, even earthly man, lives not by bread alone, and that he requires other enjoyments besides those of the body. Labour was regarded as the penalty of sin, and, as such, men desired to endure as little of it as possible. But things are now greatly changed, and I do not say for the worse. God, who in the chastisements of this world provides for the good of man, permits that when nations lose sight of Heaven,

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* De Legibus, ii.

avidity should impel them to hard labour in the strict judicial sense of the word, to which human justice drives dangerous criminals. So while passions are unchained in hearts, self-interest forges irons for them, and leisure decreases in proportion to the development of bad desires. It is with nations as with individuals, and it is providential as well as severe[*]."

A sense therefore of the joyfulness which the Catholic faith imparts to a population is among the deepest impressions which result from a survey of the world; for, I repeat it, we cannot even make a brief sojourn with a people under its influence, without being, as Virgil says,

> "Nescio quâ præter solitum dulcedine læti[†]."

The least accessible to cheerful inspirations, one like the duke, in Measure for Measure, "rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at any thing which professes to make him rejoice—a gentleman of all temperance," can hardly be insensible here; while all men who partake of the affinity for cheerful influences which belong to a poetic genius, by an involuntary instinct, seem drawn at some period or other towards lands where faith predominates; for as one least willing to magnify it says,

> "A cheerful life is what the muses love,
> A soaring spirit is their prime delight."

But, you will tell me, all are not so affected by the spectacle. No, certainly—Non sic impii, non sic; some who even lay claim to extraordinary piety have very different impressions; and an observation of this phenomenon, which completes the great lesson from the whole, will lead us on this path to the point where another road branches off.

Speaking of the public festivals of Italy, a French author says, that the great assist at them only as spectators, and inquisitive persons who grow impatient if they see plebeians smile, not as in the middle ages, when in common with the people they were impassioned actors in them. "Faith," he adds, "secured gaity in the world then; the heart can only be gay when it still believes in some thing[‡]." Bassanio's question to his friend might be often addressed to these observers, "Good Signiors, when shall we laugh? say when." If they do leer upon the spectacle, it is with an eye that wounds like a leaden sword. At best, impatience lowers in their face.

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[*] Monographie de Bourges, 156.

[†] Georg. i. 411.

[‡] Valery, Curiosités et Anecdotes Italiennes.

Here then is the first class of persons who are proof against the cheerful influence of Catholicity,—men who are self-excluded by the tepidity of their character arising from the secret doubts or avowed scepticism produced by the riches and honours of the world,—men who only need virtue to be like the stoics, to whom we may address the indignant question of Cicero, "Tu autem inter hæc tantam multitudinem hominum interjectam non vides, nec lætantium nec dolentium?*"

The second class is darker still; for its insensibility is studied, and the fruit of an evil choice in resisting truth. In England such persons of most vinegar aspect when others smile, studiously avoid the well-dressed vulgar on the Sundays; shut themselves within doors, close even their windows perhaps, and deem indecorous any participation in the palest image of a happy population. When in foreign countries their spleen breaks forth in taunts and reproaches, "God give them grace to groan," they say. But why are you so vex'd? the Catholic demands; why do you frown?

> "Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
> Sorrow flies far; see, here be all the pleasures
> That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts."

In vain such invitations! The tartness of their face sours ripe grapes, and night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing. Sad ministers of him who loves disunion, the happy place imparts to them no happiness, no joy—but rather inflames their torment. The more they see pleasures about them, so much more they feel torment within them, as from the hateful siege of contraries, and all good to them becomes bane. Each loathes the pastime and the joy, muttering with Leontes, "They should not laugh if I could reach them, nor shall those within my power." Like the cold pointed glacier, that advances most in summer towards the warm meadow, so these men are most pushing in their icy bitter taunts when all things smile around them. It is as if under their black gown lurked all the dark passions that the Pagans knew; for Protestantism, like Envy beholding Athens, sees with displeasure the joy of a Catholic land,

> "Ingeniisque opibusque et festâ pace virentem,
> Vixque tenet lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit†."

It sees the devotion full of joyful thankfulness—it sees the dance and the game—it sees the smiling faces—the youth, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, all mirth—the old

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* De Finibus, ii. 5. † Met. ii. 17.

serene and cheerful—it sees the glorious works of rapturous art—it sees the success of men, intuendoque videndo. "As a consequence of the fall," says Antonio de Guevara, "one man took pleasure in being sad, in order that another should not be joyous *." If heresy finds men in that condition, there it leaves them; while elsewhere, the false philosophy, which is its ally, purposely creates it, forming men self-tormentors, conscious of affinity with all who trouble peace and order, who hate that the world should go well; who rather had, though they themselves did suffer by it, behold dissentious numbers pestering streets, than see our tradesmen singing in their shops, and going about their functions friendly. "On ne rit guère aujourd'hui," says the songster of these sophists, adding this question for them to answer, "Est-on moins heureux?" He returns often to the same complaint: "Le plaisir s'envole," still asking for a remedy.

"Mais au Français attristé,
Qui peut rendre la gaité?"

Alas! that secret is denied to his muse, whatever buffoonery may boast. And is there no figured hand here stretched-out at this last issue of the path which points to the truth of Catholicity? Truly there is direction here; and many, who now are weeping or too bitter in their despondency to find relief in tears, would, if they had followed it, rejoice. Truly there is heard a voice proclaiming that the happiness of life, when faith departed, fell; and then, no sooner to the listening ear has come the high assurance, than many, as Dante says, "have understood new virtue into them infused, and hearts have been kindled afresh with vigour to sustain excess of joy however pure."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROAD OF POPULAR DEVOTION.

QUITTING the goal as we have ever used, so custom, as Dante adds, being usher to the way, through wild scenes presenting thorns for the crown, and beneath them the pale box which serves for palm at Easter, we come to another delightful road, wider still than any which we hitherto have followed, which soon turns to a not more doubtfully, as an end which bears the title of Our Lady's Succour; for lo! here we join a vast multitude com-

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* L'Horloge des Princes, lib. i. 244.

posed of all the common people of the Church, moving with steps simple or devout, conscious of the end to which they hasten, proclaiming and pointing at it to all who meet them, though like innocent children seeming to be guided rather by instinct and the strong affinity of mysterious nature, than by self-directed philosophical reasoning. O! wonder! How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world, that has such people in it! Along the road we hear chanted psalms and hymns, and sweet responses, attesting faith in the Almighty Lord, who sweetly disposeth all things. O quam gloriosum est regnum, in quo cum Christo gaudent omnes sancti! Here is but its shadow, and that surpasses all else on earth.

We can trace gentle emotion, love, constancy, and hope in all that pass along, while on every side through the intricate wild wood, here disarmed of its doubt and terror, a maze of life and light and motion is divinely woven. As we inhale the breeze, and as our eyes wander through the romantic glades that open into the forest, the heart is gladdened; for there are so many directing voices awakening the echoes, that even those who strike off from time to time through the thickets are never bewildered, but always able to judge, even in the deepest shade, of the direction in which they are walking. We can wander at will unseen among the boughs, and pause to gather violets in the lonely glade, and yet always reckon with certainty upon being able to regain the road, and then follow with the rest. This, reader, is the road which leads us to survey popular manners retaining the influence of Catholicity: and the crowd which throngs it is composed of the faithful multitude;—peasants, charcoal-burners, workmen, and the poor inhabitants of towns, of every employment and condition and age; the village children, and their grandmothers blessing them and blessed by them; hearing or relating, not the passage of conquerors and emperors, but the religious themes which ever live in the memory and hearts of the people to perpetuate and sanctify their joy.

This road, bringing men acquainted with the religious practices, motives, sentiments, expressions, customs, and traditions of a Catholic population, forms a most gracious avenue, through which the divine perfection of the Church is seen by those who mark them with an observant soul.

Among the people, or, as Armado says, "the base vulgar," every traveller, however supercilious, must at times be thrown, at least if willing, like most young men, to go sometimes all a-foot in summer's scalding heat. All therefore must tread this road, and have the means of profiting by the direction which it yields, for which no one has to wait long. In many places we can find it in the first salutation which greets us on the way, as

the rising sun sprinkles the dewy earth with glittering light. In many German provinces the people use the salutation, which is observed by the discalced Carmelites, "Laudetur Jesus Christus;" to which the answer is, "in sæcula, Amen;" to which formula, whether in the Latin or vulgar tongue, Sixtus V. attached indulgences*.

In Spain the first words always were, "Ave Maria purissima," to which the response was, "sine labe concepta." On leaving, it is the custom to say, "May you depart with God;" to which the reply is, "May you remain with God and the Virgin." In Provence the usual salutation of the country people is, "Ben lou, bouon jour, et à vouestre compagne †," alluding to your guardian angel, whom they salute thus with you. Here is therefore—

"A lesson which is quickly learn'd;
A signal this which all can see!"

But let us remark the popular practices for which the least occasion serves. The day on which the stranger first trod the soil of France, he went to swim, as was his custom, where he could. A tall juvenal, full of noisy mirth, who went into the water first, made the sign of the cross before committing himself to the waves, and thus, very unconsciously no doubt, directed his companion to a custom of the primitive Church, expressly mentioned by Tertullian, who says, that Christians signed themselves so always before bathing. Here, as in most cases, it was better to be the artless practitioner than the spy; but the instruction was not lost on one who played the latter part after that day no more. Thus Catholic mothers guide the rude hand of poor plebeian boys in tracing on themselves the awful sign of that wherein they hope for victory; pointing thus even to the deep mystic, as well as to the ordinary theological and popular senses which are involved in what the Church prescribes: for, as Pope Innocent III. says, "in making the sign of the cross we descend from top to bottom, and pass from right to left, to express that Christ descended and passed from the Jews to the Gentiles; but when we make the sign on others, we sign them from left to right, because from misery we wish them to pass to glory, from death to life ‡." Here is then, besides, a signal which points to the mysterious antiquity of the pious practices of the people; for, as antiquaries know, "the first mention in the sacred history of a benediction by the imposition of hands, attests the use of the form of a cross—"a mute prophecy," says the

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* Hæftenus Œconomiæ Monast. lib. i. 5.

† Bien le bon jour, et à votre compagnon.

‡ De Sac. Alt. Myst. lib. ii. 44.

Père Cahier, which might be perpetuated in the liturgical traditions of the people of God, till the coming of the Messiah *." "When Joseph," as Pope Innocent III. observes, "brought Manasses and Ephraim to Jacob, he placed the elder on the right and the younger on the left, that Jacob might bless them in order; but he, changing his hands, that is, placing one upon the other in the form of a cross, placed his right hand on Ephraim the younger, and his left on Manasses †." The custom of tracing a cross at the beginning of every letter, which prevailed in Spain till the late events, may be learned from the play of the "Gardener's Dog," by Lopez de Vega, where the young secretary Theodore, about to write a note, which he fears may prove fatal to him, begins by saying, "May this cross avert the woe which threatens me!" Books were printed, and medical prescriptions written, with this sign prefixed, according to the popular custom, which required its usage on all occasions. Over each cottage-door and stable we see the cross; and to what a remote origin does this practice point? The Thau or the cross was the sign which the Hebrews traced on their doors with the blood of the paschal lamb, the form and name of this letter, as the Père Cahier observes, being nearly invariable in the three great learned languages, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, to proclaim the union of all nations by the cross ‡. Again, within each chamber the traveller finds holy water and a crucifix, with the palm of Easter. The canons of the early Church are thus brought before us, as if we read Regino, abbot of Prum, collecting them in the ninth century, and saying, "Holy water must be used; for if the ashes of a calf could sanctify the people, how much more water consecrated by divine prayers? and if salt could heal the waters, how much more water and salt, by divine prayer blest, may take away sterility, multiply good, avert evil, and defend men from all harm. Let then all have leave to take away holy water in vessels, to sprinkle their houses and lands and vines, their cattle and their provender, their meat and drink §." Again the people love to wear on their persons, not unmeaning trinkets, but symbols that denote the faith of their hearts. A recent traveller from the land of Disdain speaks of remarking relics and medals round the necks of Spanish peasants. One, he says, attributed his escapes to an image of the Virgin of Grief of Cordova, which never quitted his breast. The Santo Rostro, or holy countenance of Jaen, is worn all over the kingdom of Granada, as the cross of Caravaca is over Murcia; the rosary and

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* Monog. de Bourges.

† De Sacro Altaris Mysterio, lib. ii. c. 42.

‡ Monog. de Bourges, 37.

§ Regino Abb. Prum, De Eccles. Discipl. lib. i. 106.

scapular being common to all Spain. The Valencian women wear engraved on their combs an image of Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados, our Lady of the Unprotected. All these he qualifies as "talismanic defences;" but the peasants were wiser and better philosophers on the subject of spiritual and supernatural protection, though without a Murray to stereotype their thoughts. But, not to delay here, it is enough to affirm that if you watch the people generally, the strictness and universality of their pious practices can lead you to a comprehension of truth—

"Admiranda tibi lævium spectacula rerum *."

For the people have not the distinctive, poetical, or picturesque, that is, striking, or, if the word be allowable, angular features of Catholicity worn off by the custom of what is termed polished life, or concealed under the varnish of the dull conventional manners required in a society that must be always on its guard, and that would embrace alike heresy, atheism, and faith. The demon, we read, in a certain person possessed, could not be taught to repeat the exact words of the Credo: he would say, "Credo Deum patrem omnipotentem," but not "Credo in Deum;" and the learned men who stood by could not induce him, for the reason, says Cæsar of Heisterbach, that "Credere in Deum est per dilectionem ire in Deum †." The people have not difficulties of this kind, and they repeat word by word exactly what the Church prescribes. Moreover they have not the stiffness and coldness of men-but half converted, who have a trick yet of the old rage, and might well say, "Bear with me, I'm sick; I'll leave it by degrees." How many do we find now standing between Catholicity and its adversaries, liks Diomede in Homer, saying,—

Τυδείδεω δ' οὐκ ἂν γνοίης ποτέροισι μετείη
'Ηὲ μετὰ Τρώεσσιν ὁμιλέοι, ἢ μετ' 'Αχαιοῖς.

"Adults who are converted from Judaism or Mahometanism," says St. Thomas of Villanova, who, if he wrote elsewhere, might perhaps have included some few others in the charge, "rarely can follow the style, conversation, and form of the Catholic life, or the ceremonies and other things which pertain to Christianity; and most rarely do they obtain faith itself; so that you can more easily engage them to undertake the hardest eremetical life than to believe thoroughly the articles of faith. Faith is therefore the greatest of all God's gifts ‡." This supreme of gifts is vouchsafed with greatest facility to the poor and humble, and there-

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* Georg. iv. 3.

† Illust. Mir. lib. iii. 6.

‡ In Fest. Trinit. c. 11.

fore the pious practices which denote its presence are found principally transmitted by the people, whose children even guard them with words like those of Guiderius to his brother: "Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to the east; my father hath a reason for it." With the people, the elementary feelings co-existing in a state of greater simplicity, the manners of the first Christians find more protection and fewer obstacles, while the very passions of such men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of the Catholic religion. But here some investigators stumble and forsake the way. The dancing of David before the ark was an occasion to him of humility, and to Michol of scorn; and thus all popular observances which restrain pride or passion, are stigmatized as being good only for the people, as if they formed an inferior class in the Church. Thus holy and approved practices furnish occasion for ridicule and displeasure to some men, who, rather than admit the beauty of the most poetical usages and forms of life, united with Christian holiness, would cultivate the fancies of a Pagan, so they might have sight of Proteus coming from the sea, or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn. "By virtue thou enforcest laughter," the man of this type exclaims, "thy silly thought my spleen; the heaving of my lungs provokes me to ridiculous smiling. O pardon me, my stars! Doth the inconsiderate take these practices for pious?" To whom Moth's answer is the best, "Do the wise think them other? What harm can your conspectuities glean out of any one of them?"

"The Catholic Church," as a recent author truly says, "finds out the secrecies of every rank of life, and sheds on each calm joys." He calls the tendrils of the grape—

> "Meet emblem of the Church, which from above
> Drinks the dew of grace upon the stock
> Of wild and useless manhood, and outpours
> Abundant comeliness on all around."

But we worldly men have miserable, mad, mistaking eyes. He who is evil can receive no good; evil minds change good to their own nature. Many who talk greasily, whose lips grow foul, act towards the people like the sad harpies with their polluted wings, who in a moment damp all the joy,

> "Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant
> Immundo *." ———————

Here is such ado to make no stain a stain as passes colouring; but to find the reason, we must dig till we arrive at the discovery of this fact in psychology, that the chief distinguishing feature of Protestantism, as it exists, is not any particular error against articles of

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* iii. 228.

faith, though it may, in its different sections, deny every one of them; but that ugly treason of mistrust, which generates a general, radical, and insuperable disposition of mind, amounting to the kind of insanity that mistook windmills for giants, to suspect and doubt, and misinterpret and malign the intention of the illiterate poor of the Catholic Church, as if it is reserved for a gentleman tourist, one of Shakspeare's shallow fools, fresh from his Quarterly Review, which entitles him, he thinks, to represent in his own person a good presence of worthies,—Hector of Troy, the parish curate, Alexander, Hercules, and Judas Machabæus, to discover or redress some disgusting and heinous contraventions of truth and justice, which the wisdom of such persons as Louis of Granada, Dionysius the Carthusian, St. Theresa, St. Charles Borromeo, "the old Christian Charlemagne," St. Louis, and all the greatest and holiest intelligences of the ancient Catholic civilization, either could not or would not detest and denounce. In fact, they avow as much, boast of such effrontery, and propose their remedies, deserving the comment which Pliny passed on those who said that the scrapings of a beetle would keep off hail, "Quæ quidem scripsisse eos non sine contemtu et irrisu generis humani arbitror *." But, in the first place, the judgment of such men is not to be heard, being themselves attainted, as separated from the communion of the faithful; and to offend and judge are distinct offices, and of opposed natures. Besides, even if they had a right to judge, what can be more ridiculous than the position they assume, though challenging applause with such words as Byron's—

"Like a demi-god here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'ereye."

However the calamity is theirs; we should rather mourn their state than laugh at it, lest perchance, as if starting from an evil dream, some of them may now be heard exclaiming—

"Help me, help me, do thy best,
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey."

Indeed they would do well to cry out so, and cast off the impressions of an evil dream. "Woe to the man," says a profound writer of our time, "woe to the man who despises the faith of the people, or who fears to join his prayer with theirs. God who loves the poor in spirit, loves not the scorner, but will leave him to perish of inanition in the profound vacancy of his pride †." In fact, setting their scorns and their mislike aside, let them tell

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* Lib. xxxvii.

† C. Sainte-Foi.

us some reason why what is best in this sphere for the people should not be the best for all, since they are objects of predilection to our Lord. I believe they would find it very difficult. The people know the very road into his favour, and cannot lose their way. " I caution you, O men of erudition and science," says the abbot Trithemius, " not to despise the devotion of the simple, not to reprehend as novelty their invocation of particular saints, but rather to imitate them. For there are amongst you, without offence to the good be it said, proud men, who scorn all devout exercises of the people—who count the examples and miracles of the saints as ravings—who think nothing admissible which they cannot prove by the arguments of the philosophers—who refute as fables and women's dreams all revelations from God to devout persons, the legends of the saints fables, and while they preach their own erudition impugn the works of God—who throw aside as useless the works of the holy fathers and devout men which are not written in Ciceronian Latin. O fools and subverters! why deceive yourselves, saying, ' We will be singled from the barbarous?' Why, if you are Christians, do you despise the ecclesiastical simplicity? The grace of God is not in eloquence, but in holy simplicity. In the day of judgment what will be required from you will be not the style of Quintilian, but a Christian life and the piety of the humble. You seek fame on earth. Foolish consolation! to be praised where you will never be, and to be tormented where you must remain for ever! And, after all, I believe that no one of this kind can be among the truly learned, ' cum vera eruditio devotionem juvare consueverit, non reprehendere *.' "

The antiquity of the greater part of the popular devotions is beyond disproof; some that have been thought modern date from distant times of fervour. St. Gertrude practised the devotion to the sacred heart †; and the most recent devotion will prove but a flower from the old root of Christianity itself, which necessarily, in successive ages, renews its vigour and its loveliness. " Why," asks a contemporary of St. Anselm, " did the prophets write so obscurely? They ought not to have done otherwise," he replies; " it is the office of builders to construct, but of painters to paint. The patriarchs dug, as it were in figures, the place designated for the Church; the prophets laid its foundation in their writings; the apostles by their preaching raised up the walls; but their followers painted it with their expositions ‡." You condemn what is called the doctrine of development; but what then think you of the action of the Christian religion in

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* Trithem. De Laudibus S. Annæ.

† Preces Gertrudianæ P. IV. de Christo.

‡ B. Anselmi Elucidarium, lib. ii.

regard to slaves? Was not that a development? How different was it in the first ages, when the sophists even pretend that the Church consented to the system of slavery, and in the later times when she found that she could abolish it? "It is not even necessary to suppose," says Balmes, "that the first Christians knew all the force of the tendency of Christianity in regard to the abolition of slavery. Enough that the result was obtained by the doctrine of the Church, and by the development of a tendency contained in it." But the adversaries of popular devotion in our age wave the discussion of its date, and seek to expose it to the shafts of mockery by an appeal to the passions of the old unregenerated nature. Do but mark the jeers, the gibes, and notable scorns that dwell in every region of their face; and yet, in truth, it is then they who merit ridicule; enough to make our very priests become mockers, if they shall encounter them; for what can be more absurd than the pride of some late writers, who seem to suppose that they exclusively, forsooth, have the discernment to see the incongruous and imperfect, and therefore comic, side of the pious practices of the common people, which devout Catholics can note as sharply as themselves, differing from them only in the wisdom which prevents them from resting in such admirable foolery, and impels them to pass on in order to feel and contemplate the Divine truth, and the virtues which are not less precious in their eyes from being associated with irregular or inadequate forms; the seeming absurdity of which, after all, arises merely from the inevitable contrast that the mind will draw between what is divine and what is human, our feeble nature still loving and clinging to the former amidst all its degeneracy. It may be well, they acknowledge, to discern the incongruity, in order to correct in themselves the insidious progress of the many venial miseries which might creep into their minds and manners; but, like some observers of our time, not to be able to distinguish the involved truth from the exterior folds would argue but a mind diseased, that merits only Shakspeare's answer, "This jest is dry to me. Your wit makes wise things foolish; your capacity is of that nature, that to your huge store wise things seem foolish, and rich things but poor." Men may cultivate the wit which can be observed to-day in those travellers who chronicle the ludicrous fancy that is produced by such inevitable combinations; but they may jest till their own scorn return to them unnoted, ere they can hide their levity in honour. For the beauty of the action which they ridicule is in the mind of those who performed it; and love for that beauty should leave no place for the vile disdain which can never penetrate beyond the surface of things, and which even very frequently

observes that surface through the diseased medium of a weak intelligence and of a corrupted heart.

But ere we proceed further through the details of popular devotion, let us remark how truly invulnerable they are, even on the side which our adversaries deem defenceless, giving such sarcenet surety for their convictions as if they never walked further than Finsbury, and how it is not to error that they lead, but to truth. In the first place piety, veneration, gratitude, love, are at the bottom of all these practices. "Omne quod ad religionem pertinet, nisi ex proposito et devotione fiat, periculum generat." This sentence from the rule of St. Basil * expresses a law of the Catholic religion of which no child is left in ignorance. "Purity and truth please God," says the rule of Solitaries, "but he rejects and hates whatever is feigned,—omne quod simulatur et fingitur †." About the principle, therefore, instilled in every catechism or book of elements, no mistake is possible, and the popular poets understood it well, who only re-echo what the people say, in singing thus with Rutebeuf—

"Les lèvres muerre ne les denz,
Ne font pas la religion,
Mes la bone componcion ‡."

Misled by calumnious representations, the modern traveller, a purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight, when he hears of crimes in Catholic countries, immediately concludes that the same men whom he sees in the morning kneeling in the churches, are employed at night in conspiracies against thrones, or breaking into houses, and robbing on the high ways; but the union of devotion with crime is no where the general order, as he supposes. Who turn their backs to altars with such scorn as the wretches in Spain and Italy, who are now the enemies of all virtue and of all honour? Where is there less external worship, less symbolic observance, than with that population boasting of its Protestantism, and left by hirelings to wander over every waste, till, forgetful of all lofty aim, it produces animals sensual and often savage, as the records of tribunals can attest, worthier of acorns than of other food created for man's use § ? or, where is there less than with the factions of that capital, only of late years perverse, which now employs the names of the days of the months to designate its insurrections? The Catholic Church does not, indeed, require that all her people should be lettered. They may have never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; they may not have eat paper, as it were, nor drunk ink; but it

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* Reg. S. Bas. xc.

† Reg. Solitar. 27.

‡ La Voie de Paradis.

§ Dante, Purg. 14.

does not follow that she has left them with intellects unreplenished, only animals, for our travelled gallants to exclaim, on watching them, O thou monster ignorance, how deformed dost thou look! Truly remarkable are the confessions extorted of late from those who deemed secular instruction a better security for popular virtue and social order than the ancient piety of the people. " The idea," says one of them, "that the multiplication of crimes proceeded from ignorance of the population, obtained such uncontradicted credit, that we have long combated against facts before renouncing it. We have sought by all sorts of combinations to escape from the conclusion which results from a simple comparison of the statistical tables of crime in the departments, but in vain; we have been forced to recognize the truth, that crime is in no way determined by the defect of instruction *." The Count d'Angeville says, " After long and patient researches, we could no longer doubt whether ignorance" (by which he means the state of a Catholic population under the priestly guidance) " is a source of crime. This opinion is a prejudice †." The Baron Charles Dupin asks, " Is it not at first sight an astounding fact, that complete ignorance " (he means the same condition as the last) " should be allied to the least proportion of crimes against persons? The class which possesses a superior instruction is precisely that which surpasses the other in the number of such crimes ‡." " Experience proves," says another of these writers, " that when isolated, instruction, this element of civilization bears few good fruits. Instruction does not suffice to ameliorate a people—it is hurtful rather than profitable §." Cousin says, " Complaints are made of the progress of impiety and superstition, but we must admit that we contribute to propagate both by allowing religious instruction to perish ||." Saint Marc Girardin says, " We have secularized study too much ¶." And again, in a work crowned by the French Academy, we read, " An essential condition of education is, that the master be personally animated by a lively religious sentiment, and that he himself should burn with that divine flame **."

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* De l'influence que la diffusion de l'instruction exerce sur la moralité des populations, par M. Allard, Journal Gen. de l'Instruct. publique, 8 Mai, 1847.

† Essai sur la statistique de la population Française, 67—70.

‡ La Morale, l'Enseignement et l'Industrie. Discours 2 Decembre, 1838.

§ Journal des Debats, 26 Decembre, 1838.

|| Rapport sur l'Etat de l'Instruc. pub. dans quelque Pays de l'Allemagne et particulièrement en Prusse.

¶ De l'Instruction dans le midi de l'Allemagne.

** Wilm. Essai sur l'Educat. du Peuple—l'Univers, 20 August, 1847.

Such are the tardy concessions of those who were once the loudest in condemning the whole mind and tendency of a devout population formed by the Catholic Church. As we proceed, we shall see how profoundly Christian is the language of those who most love upon their mouth to trace the potent cross, how simple is the piety that fills the smallest actions of the people, and pervades all their frame; and how "hardly can they muse upon and transmit these types, whose conscience tells them of disturbances indulged in wilfully." But let us hear the positive instruction which dwells upon the necessity of a pious mind to make the external practice of any value. "Worship," says Savonarola, "is twofold—exterior and interior; but the exterior is ordained for the interior; for the sacraments of the Church, and the external praises, and all things that belong to ceremonies, are ordained for the internal edification of the mind. Therefore the chief study of the Christian life is to worship God by interior acts, though the exterior acts ought not to be left undone *." "Have you acted," say the Councils, "like those who, when going to church, speak of vanity on the way, without any thought useful to the soul? and when they come to the yard of the church, where the bodies of the faithful are buried, while treading on their graves do not make any prayers for the souls of those who rest there? If so, you must do penance on bread and water for ten days. In such places you must pray for the repose of souls, and pray the holy souls, whose bodies lie there, to intercede for you with God †." The learned consult Burchard and Regino; but the people, as every one who sees them going and coming can bear witness, observe what they prescribe. Thus, in the Ménagier de Paris, the wife is instructed in these words—"Que à l'aler au moustier vous accompaigniez convenablement selon vostre estat, et par espécial avec preudes femmes; et en alant ayant la teste droite, les paupières basses et arrestées, et la veue droit devant vous quatre toises, et bas à terre, sans regarder ou espandre vostre regard à homme ne à femme qui soit à destre ou à senestre, ne regarder hault, ne vostre regard changer en divers lieux muablement, ne rire, ne arrester à parler à aucun sur les rues." Again, the people love processions; and friars tell them how they should conduct themselves when they so walk; for the poor man was to act like the friar, who is thus reminded—

"Cor sursum levabit,
Manus conjunctas servabit,
Oculos in terram demittet.
Religio gressu incedet,
Piis meditationibus intendet ‡."

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* Savonarol. Expos. Orat. Domin. Prooemium.

† Burchardi Decret. lib. xix.

‡ Speculum Vit. S. Franc.

Indeed Antonio de Escobar expressly says, that the vulgar youth is modelled by the priest who has charge of it ; for, after citing the words, " ut populus sic sacerdos," yes, he adds, and as in the case of holy Vincent, " ut sacerdos, sic popularis adolescens *." But the modern Donatists say, you are like Pharisees, heeding little things. To whom St. Augustin answers, " And you observe neither great nor little. Some great things, however, you do observe. Habetis res magnas—quas inter vestras justitias ventiletis, divisionem Christi, rescissionem Sacramentorum Christi, desertionem pacis Christi, bellum contra membra Christi, criminationes in conjugem Christi, negationem promissorum Christi †." What says our Lord of little things? " Hæc autem oportuit facere, et illa non omittere." " To fail in these little things from principle," as the Père de Ligny adds, " is to contradict his word ; to obey Him in these is to act from love, since Paradise and hell are not at stake. Yet this is what you call littleness of mind ; while with only low and creeping virtues, if it be not even too much to call them so, you place yourselves in the class of sound and elevated intelligences ‡." Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

The people who gladly follow little practices of former Saints, can perfectly well with the Church make the distinction on which you now so needlessly insist. " Quidquid supra justitiam offertur Deo," says St. Paulinus ; " non debet impedire justitiam sed adjuvare §." While, as a modern poet and philosopher observes, the sweetness which we find upon this path, " comes to all by following ancient Saints in little things." These little things, not less after all in outward act than the gift of a cup of water, which is as nothing to the eyes of human wisdom, are not the result of that blind chance which rules the caprices of either an uninformed or of a mere imaginative mind. The author of the celestial mechanism remarks that " the curve described by a grain of sand, carried by the wind, is regulated in a manner as certain as the planets ;" and we may add, that every rule and practice of devotion sanctioned by the Catholic Church, is as fixed, and in its principle as indispensable, as the majestic laws that rule yon rolling orbs. Yes,

> All customs of the Saints, or ways of spending time,
> Or rules for winning grace, or petty rites,
> Deserveth man's esteem. And is't not they
> Who least are gifted with the inward light
> And gladness of his presence, that despise
> Small things so hallow'd, and are forwardest
> To make the abuse of these by hypocrites

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* In Evang. Com. tom. vi. 149.

† Cont. Gaudent. ii. 27.

‡ Hist. de J. C.

§ D. Paulini Epist. L.

Their argument for scorn of little things,
Which tender hearts esteem so fair and good?
Oh, that the awful presence might be found
In all around us! Then such outward things
Would burst as naturally from all their hearts,
As flowers toward the light when spring returns,
To pay with fragrant savour rain from heaven *."

The pious practices of the people point to the Catholic Church as having originally suggested and constantly sanctioned them for wise and important ends, to the accomplishment of which she knew them to be instrumental. The Catholic religion proposes to follow the example of the Deity in providing for the redemption of man by art, as her choirs sing on Good-Friday,

———" Hoc opus nostræ salutis
Ordo depoposcerat,
Multiformis proditoris
Ars ut artem falleret."

And, with respect to the means thus employed as distinguished from the end, the adversaries may be obnoxious to the same confusion of ideas, which Butler supposes in the argument of those who wonder why God should have employed so many means in the original scheme of man's salvation: for, as he says, "We are greatly ignorant how far things are considered by the Author of nature, under the single notion of means and ends, so as that it may be said, this is merely an end, and that merely means in his regard; and whether there be not some peculiar absurdity in our very manner of conception, concerning this matter, somewhat contradictory arising from our extremely imperfect views of things, it is impossible to say †." Acts of humility, adoration, hope, and faith, under whatever form, such as are all the popular practices we have in view, may be more than means conducing to the final end at which we aim. But be this as it may, we know that "whatever was created, needs to be sustained and fed;" and that whatever can contribute to form a shield of might against the evil one, should be employed in the warfare of the spirit. As a recent poet remarks,

"Saint Paul, when teaching Christian warriors
How they shall arm their fingers for the fight,
Hath not unmindful been of attitude
In prayer, but lifting up of holy hands enjoins."

The Catholic Church shuts out wisdom at no entrance, but makes every sense a passage for it; and the least of her ceremonies, performed mystically, that is, with the simple faith of the people, can be the cause of immense interior illumination,

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* Morris.

† Anal. ii. 4.

which will be only increased through the eternal years. "A certain learned man," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, once standing in church, "when the choir sang, Incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, when all others inclined themselves, continued erect, whom the demon, standing near, smote, saying, 'O ungrateful mortal, how standest thou? Why not bow down with thy brethren? Didst thou not hear that God for thee was made man? If for me He had done so, I would have bowed to Him for ever [*]!'"

True; "in our hands," says Antonio de Escobar, following St. Bernard, "these lights are shaded; for we are not yet in that eternal house where lights can be carried securely without fear of winds, that is, of demons—but here we have need of both hands to shelter as well as to carry them, not trusting the air, however calm it may appear [†]." Though they may appear to you confused and inadequate exponents, they are of excellent use in the spiritual journey of this life, as the experience of which you know nothing proves.

The people in observing these practices manifest their resolution to believe what the Church believes and teaches; and though their ideas on each point may be indistinct, they evince the faith of Martha, who replied, "Utique, Domine, ego credidi quia tu es Christus filius Dei vivi, qui in hunc mundum venisti [‡]." St. Augustin uses the benedictions of the Church, from which all these popular devotions flow, to establish the necessity of grace, as he makes use of the exorcisms in baptism to establish against heretics the doctrine of original sin. The people know that the Church implores the blessing of God on irrational and insensible creatures, in order to chase the demons, and render them salutary to her children for time and eternity; and all these ceremonies of benediction were respected and received among Christians till the twelfth century, when, in 1140, the Vaudois chose to attack them [§].

That the popular practices should be performed through habit, seems another insuperable objection to those less read in Plato and Cicero than in the declamations of heretics, who think to hew down oaks with rushes, using the argument of disobeying Eve, with Milton saying,

"For good unknown sure is not had; or had,
And yet unknown, is as not had at all [||]."

But however Erasmus might pronounce his non probo, in the

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[*] 214.
[†] In Evang. Comment. tom. vii.
[‡] Le Père de Ligny, hist. de J. C.
[§] La Tradition de l'Eglise sur les Bénédictions, 5.
[||] ix.

habit of such practices may be included the all-sufficient good which secures our final beatitude; and it is by habit after all that souls are saved, so true it is that breach of custom is breach of all.

"Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey;
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day."

The pious practices of the people are the result of habit, it is true; but though the æsthetic effect may be less felt by them, the positive results will be more sure; for, as Butler says, from the observation, "that practical habits are formed and strengthened by repeated acts, and that passive impressions grow weaker by being repeated upon us; it must follow that active habits may be gradually forming and strengthening by a course of acting upon such and such motives and excitements, whilst these motives and excitements themselves are, by proportionable degrees, growing less sensible, that is, are continually less and less sensibly felt, even as the active habits strengthen. And experience confirms this; for active principles at the very time that they are less lively in perception than they were, are found to be somehow wrought more thoroughly into the temper and character, and become more effectual in influencing our practice *." Besides, "Man," says Goethe, "does not like to act ex abrupto. Improvisation is not in his nature. This is no less true in the moral and religious order, than in the physical and civil life. He requires, in his actions, a certain series or succession which becomes transformed into habit. What he is to love and perform must not be presented to his mind as something isolated, having no relation to other interests. If he is to reiterate an action, it must not become strange to him. The Protestant system," he adds, "reverses this law."

Thus you perceive, that, according even to these philosophers, who are deemed most profound by the opponents now confronted with us, the objection is invalid, so that with a poet we may ask,—

"If this belief from Heaven is sent,
If such be nature's holy plan,
Have we not reason to lament
What man has made of man?"

On all sides now voices are heard like those of the Pharisees to our Lord—Magister, increpa discipulos tuos. Reprove, silence these crowds; suppress, discontinue these usages. And what is the offence? Truly it amounts to this, that the multi-

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* Analog. i. 5.

tude is receiving our Lord with Hosanna Filio David, Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Alas! too frequently it is indeed rebuked, as if in compliance with such cries; though, as Ives of Chartres says to Manassas, Archbishop of Reims, "videbantur illæ litteræ magis percutere robur sanorum, quam colligare vulnera infirmorum *."

"Some Dutch heretics," says Mabillon, "objected to us certain things as superstitious which they had seen at Naples; but when we spoke of them to a certain nobleman," he replied, "non decere, ut quod fidei domesticos ædificat, in gratiam exterorum et segregum facile abrogetur †." Such is the spirit and prescription of the Catholic Church. Pope Nicholas I. in the Roman council decreed, as the annals of Fulda note especially, that if any one should despise the dogmas, mandates, interdicts, sanctions, or decrees, promulgated wholesomely by the Holy See, for the Catholic faith, the ecclesiastical discipline, the correction of the faithful, the emendation of the depraved, the warding off impending or future evils, he should be anathema ‡; and another council declared, that whatever our spiritual and universal Father the Pope by apostolic authority has decreed, should be received with the utmost veneration by all, and with due obedience observed by all §. Now there are no devout practices of the people which have not obtained that sanction.

In fine, we hear proclaimed the danger, if not the certainty of abuse, if the ancient devout popular exercises be permitted; but the common reason of man can suffice to furnish an answer to such objectors—

> "Nil prodest, quod non lædere possit idem,
> Igne quid utilius? si quis tamen urere tecta
> Comparat, audaces instruit igne manus.
> Et latro et cautus præcingitur ense viator,
> Ille sed insidias, hic sibi portat opem ||."

We know that some are hardened more by what might most reclaim, but it is Satan's argument to conclude therefore that the means are not divine; for so the poet makes him reason,—

> "What Heaven's Lord had powerfullest to give,
> To sanctify us from his throne, and judged
> Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
> But proves not so; then fallible, it seems,
> Of future we may deem Him, though till now
> Omniscient thought ¶."———

But, leaving now the sophists to their vain babbling, to be

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* Ivon. Casnotens. Epist. 85.

† Dom Mab. Iter Italicum, 64.

‡ c. 3.

§ Hist. Cassinensis. xii. 840.

|| Trist. 11.

¶ vi.

considered where it is thought worth while, let us proceed with the multitude on whom it has no power, and mark the direction which their language and their devout exercises supply.

As it is the Catholic Church which understands best the popular mind, so in turn it is the popular mind that has the most certain tact, bordering on an intuitive sense to ordain and think all things in accordance with the spirit of Catholicity, in whatever relates to religion and to the practices of daily life connected with it. Among the higher classes, in the absence of faith,

"Omnia naturæ præpostera legibus ibunt *"—

and with the spirit of the Church they will be in equal contradiction; so that no one above the vulgar will blame the taste of those who dine to the music of a Te Deum, and entertain visitors with a Stabat Mater. The people, however, instantly feel that there is something wrong, incongruous and indecent in such associations. Similarly in regard to ancient usages they will be shocked at their neglect. When they approach the altar, instinctively they will hold up naked hands, without having ever heard that the hand has always been invested with a certain mystery. I cite, perhaps, trivial instances, but they can serve to exemplify that certain traditional sense of Christian propriety which has its origin, no doubt, either in some natural law or in an early and intimate acquaintance with the words and general tenour of the book of God.

"In the middle ages," says a French author, "every one knew Solomon's Proverbs by heart, and from the thirteenth century pilgrim monks had introduced the proverbial philosophy of Pilpay into Europe. The proverb in Spain agreed as well with the high Hidalgo as with the rough Asturian peasant. The custom of borrowing certain modes of proverbial speech from the Holy Scriptures has always prevailed also among the French. It is not surprising that the Bible should have exercised such an influence on our old proverbs; for in the middle ages the Bible was the book 'par excellence,' that which every one used to study before all others, and which served as a model for almost all compositions †."

Lopez de Vega in his plays, especially in that entitled "The best Alcade is the King," represents the Spanish peasant as perfectly familiar with the Bible and its histories; and Lord Carnarvon observes that the language of the Guerilla in Navarre, with whom he conversed, was always elevated and sometimes scriptural. Another English traveller indeed, of a very different

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* Ovid. Trist. i. 7.

† Le Roux de Lincy, le livre des Proverbs Français, tom. i. introd.

class, hopes to convey a contrary impression ; but he refutes himself ; for he speaks of the lion of Bethlehem to one of the men who he pretends never heard of the Bible, and who perfectly understands his Scriptural images.

The language of the Psalms too had become the popular language ; and a recent English traveller expresses his astonishment to find a Norman peasant instructed in the mystic sense of some of the most difficult sentences of Israel's King. In the ninth century we find a decree, that "each priest should admonish his parishioners to send their children to his school to learn the psalter *."

Moreover, there was a book for the people, very intelligible to them, furnished by the stained-glass windows of the old churches, which on the continent were generally executed by order of the different corporations of tradesmen and mechanics, in which the Old and New Testament are made to throw light upon each other ; and of which the learned Father Cahier says, "The biblical knowledge is so profound, that even the attentive observer, while endeavouring to trace through these complicated labyrinths the constant thought of the artist, may feel the thread of the first intention escape from his hands ; but if the continuity of plan should baffle his researches, something in the grave symmetry of these mysterious combinations warns him that the fault is only in the interpreters, and that the primitive sap is never lost, however intricate may be the wanderings †." "We shall often," he says, "have occasion to remark, that the people in the middle ages possessed in general an instruction on religion extremely developed, and vastly superior to what is often supposed. When the middle ages affirm that painting is the book of the unlearned, we must not suppose that the unlearned meant the ignorant. Far from ignorant, to speak truly, were those men of the old population for whom the artist knew that his language of forms would become a discourse on which, involving a higher sense than the represented facts, his picture would exhibit in its results much less facts than doctrines ‡." The ancient oracles of popular wisdom can even still be better understood by the multitude than by many learned antiquarians, to whom they seem a grotesque enigma ; while the Catechism and the rustic tradition supply a clue that fails not the poor. To this hour, in allusion especially to the popular expressions, we may repeat the poet's words, and say, that "Language is a perpetual Orphic song, which rules with Dædal harmony a throng of thoughts and forms, which in the religious and moral order were otherwise senseless and shapeless. In the year 813, a

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* Regino Abb. Prum. De Eccles. discip. lib. i. 104.

† Monographie de Bourges, 19. ‡ Id. ii.

council indeed forbade plebeios psalmos to be sung in churches*;" but it is certain that these popular chants were in strict conformity with faith; and indeed so addicted are the people to transfer what they see and hear in churches to common life, that Pope Innocent III. assigns as one reason why the prayers after the Preface are repeated secretly, the danger lest sacro-sanct words should grow familiar, while all persons knowing them by usage should sing them in streets and other incongruous places †. So incorporated were Catholic ideas with the whole popular mind, and so incapable did it become of pointing elsewhere but to the Church, that we find in ancient representations, addressed to the people, a Christian character imparted to all men promiscuously. It is remarked, that in the play of Lopez de Vega, called "The Labours of Jacob—the Joseph of Lopez is the Joseph of Genesis; but that his piety, charity, and humility, seem to have a more Christian character;" so that while Protestantism imparts a Judaic spirit to Christians, Catholicism tends to invest the ancient Jews with the perfections of the new law. The popular language, of course, in countries that have retained faith, directs at every turn to the Catholic religion. Mabillon, travelling in Germany, remarks the custom there for watchmen to cry out at the ninth hour of the evening, "Put out fires and lights, that God, with Mary, may protect us ‡!"

The popular interpretation of the language of the Catholic Church is sure also to direct to the profound wisdom and to the admirable precision which characterize it: as when by the terms Mirror of Justice, Mystical Rose, Tower of David, Stella matutina, or Stella Maris—Electa ut Sol, Porta Cœli—it understands what we are told they imply by the canonized writers who have explained them. In the middle ages the people could enter into the most subtle distinctions connected with singularities in the divine office; as, for instance, understanding with Rupert that we do not bend our knees at the prayer for the Jews on Good-Friday, for the reason that their blindness can be expelled by no hand of prayer until the fullness of the Gentiles shall be accomplished, and therefore that neither ought nor could we resist the Divine judgment §. The learned Father Cahier, in proposing to give a kind of archæological calendar of popular piety, suggests another instance; for it was an ancient ceremony, he says, in the night of Christmas, which is preserved still in some provinces, through regard for the people, that a sibyl, preceded by trumpets, should walk before the canon who was

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* Faustinus Arevalus, Hymnodia Hispanica, 88.
† De Sac. Alt. Myst. lib. iii. c. 1.
‡ Iter Germanicum.
§ De Div. Officiis, lib. vi. 18.

to sing the Liber Generationis, and that, after the ninth lesson, or the Te Deum, this nameless sibyl should sing the Judgment, beginning—

"El jorn del Judici,
Parra qui n'ha fet servici.
Jesu Christ rey univesal,
Home y ver Deu eternal,
Del cel vendra pera judjar,
Y a cadahu lo just dar ;"

the modulation of which chant, like that of the Genealogy still sung in Paris, had something profoundly melancholy and solemn, which savoured of antiquity, from which it had been transmitted not by notation but by the popular memory. When the chant was finished, the sibyl, who was to hold a sword, had to brandish it three times with a menacing aspect, and so the matins finished. The popular devotion would preserve this sibyl without a name, so easily recognized as being the same with that of the Dies iræ, and would perpetuate this intercalation of the tremendous prophecy in the very night when all remembrances might be expected to breathe only joy and sweetness ; but by such desires it only manifests its faithful acquiescence in the direction of the holy Fathers, and its attentive observation of the vigil prayer, —" Deus, qui nos redemptionis nostræ annua expectatione lætificas, præsta ut Unigenitum tuum, quem redemptorem læti suscipimus, venientem quoque judicem securi videamus Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum." In general the popular speech is " the wandering stream which filtres from the summit of the ancient wisdom, which we find half-way on its side as we ascend, —clear, cool, refreshing the grass through which it glides, and which it is sweet to drink when, through fatigue, the path becomes too steep, and the sun too ardent."

The fathers of the Order of Mercy relate, in the history of their order, that Father Hernand de la Croix, though very learned, used to study particularly to converse with ignorant and unlearned persons, and that he used to explain his motive by observing, that God had often taught him from conversing with them things which he would never have known by study alone *. Even from their songs how much is there to learn ! " We can affirm," say the authors Grimm, " that we have never been able to discover a single falsehood in the songs of the people. When a peasant wishes to praise a composition of this kind, he says not that it is beautiful, but that it is true †." In general, what Pliny says of wine may be predicated of the mental drink pro-

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* Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 221.

† Deutsche Haus und Kindermarchen.

vided for the world now—"Mirum dictu, innocentius jam est quodcunque et ignobilius *." Certainly, within this sphere, the judgment of the people or its tact can be relied on for direction. "The people," says the Père de Ligny, "judged rightly of our Lord; for the people never lose their way when they only follow that right straightforward sense which is common to all men, and which in them is the clearer and the more secure from being less mixed with science and subtility; though while thus participating in the infallibility of the Divine judgment, they have not its immutability, since they pass quickly from one sentiment to another." The Church understood this well, and confided in the popular conviction which she has the secret, in a certain measure, for rendering fixed and unchangeable. The popular mind, rendered so essentially Catholic by means of the Rosary, and the habit of reflection on the joyful, dolorous, and glorious mysteries, the efficacy of which is so wonderfully attested by the constant succession of simple, holy souls, could not, in consequence of that devotion, but acquire an habitual and practical, and even profound appreciation, of the Christian duties and obligations; all was in memory locked, and the Church herself kept the key of it. Now this was sufficient; "for," says the Père Cahier, "let us be well convinced from what we even read in history of this æsthetic character of Christianity, namely, that it possesses too great a vitality, that it is too clearly destined for universality, and that its end is too elevated, for its true notion to be found wherever reigns a restless and suspicious analysis; wherever presides that distrustful and cold criticism, which exceeds so enormously the true limits of its province, when it appears to believe that the Incarnate Word has only brought us subjects of study and of interminable discussion. Hence the Church never writes down a doctrine, excepting through an urgent necessity, and often even then with so evident a repugnance, that precipitate minds would be tempted to believe that, insensible to the danger, she compromises by her delays the deposit of faith. For she never pronounces unless when compelled by a present necessity: such a belief has she in the power of the primitive teaching! though her adversaries would represent her as substituting her own authority for that of the word of God. Polemics even seem imposed on her, when she does accept them; she only consents to engage in them after violent attacks, and only not to fail in her ministry, which consists in maintaining amongst men the knowledge of divine truth. Beyond that her instruction is chiefly for hearts. Curiosity finds no pasture in it. Cite not the scholastic disputes. These subtle discussions were not on a public arena. They were confined to

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* xxiii. 20.

the school which was for the champions of the Church. In fine, what we affirm is this, that an instruction habitually critical, addressed to mental curiosity, whether from chairs or in books, or in other words, a scientific teaching, agrees not with the Church. It believes first—then speaks, and as faith is addressed to the will, the heart must needs have the chief part in its expression, and hence that warmth, that poetical tone, inseparable from the social manifestations of true Christianity *."

The deep, practical, and habitual character of popular devotion, which accords so well with this repugnance for the legislative mania in regard to doctrinal teaching, opens therefore an avenue to the Catholic Church, which alone has the secret of communicating to the multitude that religious character, so that it should endure through successive generations, and of perpetuating the faculty in the other classes of appreciating its value. For in the absence of her influence we find that idle Lords, in their capacity of senators, are as vociferous as some indefatigable Deputies of France in denouncing it as fanaticism. But how shall we reply to them pouring forth thus in the Parliament of two nations their common grief? Indeed, to use an expression of Shakespeare, "The tears live in an onion, that should water this sorrow." However, not to give them light answers, I would refer them to the words of St. Ambrose, who thus expresses the tenor of Catholic instruction to the upper ranks; "Disdain not the rusticity of the persons in the shepherds. Certainly the cheaper they are to the eyes of human prudence, the more precious are they to faith. The Lord did not require a school filled with a choir of sages, but a simple population which knew not how to varnish or to disguise the things which it heard: for what is desired is not ambition, but simplicity †." The people as thirsting, come to the waters, fulfilling the prophetic words, "Leva in circuitu oculos tuos, et vide: omnes isti congregati sunt, venerunt tibi; filii tui de longè venient, et filiæ tuæ de latere surgent" They come, as Dante says, "tumultuous, curving each his rapid step by eagerness impell'd of holy love ‡."

"Circumstet chorus ex utroque sexu,
Heros, virgo, puer, senex, anicla §."

They encourage each other in words like those of St. Augustin, "Let us love our Lord God, let us love his Church; Him as a father, her as a mother, Him as the Lord, her as his handmaid, because we are sons of his handmaid ||." Let us beware of

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[*] Monog. de Bourges, i. 90.

[†] Lib. ii. in cap. 2 Lucæ.

[‡] Purg. 18.

[§] Prudentius.

[||] S. August. in Ps. lxxix.

injuring her, they repeated in their quaint proverbial style, for jamais chien ne mordist l'église qu'il n'enrageast, which might explain the madness now of many.

The people in their simplicity allow of no jest with holy things,—"I will not play with the eye or with faith," is the old Spanish proverb. The people will have nothing in common with the enemies of the Church. They have the faith of Abraham, the honour of Abraham too, as when he said to the king of Sodom that he would take nothing from him,—à filo subtegminis, usque ad corrigiam caligæ. "One movement of society in France," says a recent author, speaking of the Pseudo reform, "was directed towards liberty of thought, sensualism, and raillery—the other, which emanated from the Church and from the people, protested against this license in favour of the old Catholicism, and of the severity of the manners of the middle classes *." And after all, in the secular society of the present day, who seem to be in earnest but the common people? No one can mistake them. How serious! how intent upon their prayers! In the Churches in the provinces in France, what patriarchal families in the lower classes do we behold, in whom the whole spirit of Catholicism lives as fresh as ever! But see them in the common streets. They pass along, and their approval or silent censure can produce impressions which recal the words of David,—Et non dixerunt qui præteribant, Benedictio Domini super nos. And again, in their turn, how full of holy desires are they! They commend themselves to the prayers of the hermit, of the beggar, of the sick, of the passing stranger, as if they heard, like St. Gertrude, a divine assurance that when any one commends himself to another's prayers, trusting to obtain grace in consideration of his favour with God, the pious Lord undoubtedly grants the desire even if he whose prayers were sought should neglect to offer them †. Accordingly where Catholicism reigns, the people collectively are respected, as forming a devout portion of the flock of Christ. Men at present value only the votes formerly little thought of; but in times of more faith, they solicited the prayers of the people, for which now are found no solicitors. In 1237, when the Knights of St. John, with the Prior Thierry at their head, set off for the holy land, leaving their house at Clerkenwell, traversing the city towards the bridge, bearing about thirty shields uncovered, with lance in rest and banner preceding, they advanced, says the historian, slowly, in order to obtain the benediction of all those who saw them pass. Each brother with head bowed down and

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* Phil. Chasles, Etudes sur le moyen âge.

† Insin. Div. Piet. S. Gert. lib. iii. c. 74.

hood thrown back on his shoulders commended himself to the prayers of the multitude *.

Let us pause a moment and fix our regards upon the direction which consists in the fervour and attitude of the people at their prayers. Mabillon travelling in Germany, while the Turks besieged Vienna, and passing the night of the 25th of August in a village sacred to St. Mary, at four hours' distance from Ratisbon, on the road to Saltsbourg, assisted at the public prayers for deliverance from the danger. These supplications lasted an hour while the Rosary was recited, many praying with arms extended in form of a cross, and a priest preaching on the impending calamity †. This fervent posture practised formerly by kings, as when Sobieski heard mass on the morning of the memorable day which beheld the deliverance of Vienna by his glorious army, and now, alas! only used by the common people, is recommended among the insinuations of divine piety by St. Gertrude in these words, " Praying once to be informed how best she could keep in memory our Lord's passion, the answer was, Praying with expanded hands exhibits the form of my passion to God the Father for the emendation of the universal Church, in union with that love with which I stretched out my hands upon the cross; and when she replied, Were I to do this, I must seek for corners, as that manner of praying is not in use, then our Lord replied, This very search for corners pleases me, and enhances the beauty of the action ‡."

So in the Ménagier de Paris, the wife is thus instructed, " Et se vous estes venue à l'église, eslisez un lieu secret et solitaire devant un bel autel ou bel ymaige, et illec prenez place, et vous y arrestez sans changer divers lieux, ne aler cà ne la, et aiez la teste droite et lièvres tousjours mouvans en disant oroisons ou prières; Aiez aussi continuellement vostre regart sur vostre livre ou au visaige de l' imaige sans regarder homme ne femme, peinture, ne autre chose, et sans papelardie ou fiction, ayez le cuer au ciel, et adorez de tout vostre cuer; et en faisant ainsi oyez messe chascun jour §."

But what were the prayers offered thus secretly by the people? " Let the laics who know not Latin," says Bede, " learn in their own tongue to sing the necessary things;" and Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans, partly specifies these when directing his clergy to admonish the faithful that they should cultivate assiduity and study in prayer. " Their mode of prayer," he says, " should be this; at first they should repeat the Creed as rehearsing the foundations of faith; then thrice they should say,

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* M. Paris ad ann. 1237.

† Iter German.

‡ Insin. Div. Piet. sen. vit. et revelat. S. Gertrudis abb., lib. iv. c. 13.

§ Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 2.

Qui plasmasti me, miserere mei, and thrice Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori; and then finish with Our Father. If place or time require, they should invoke the holy apostles and martyrs, that they may intercede for them; and arming their foreheads with the sign of the cross, raising up their hands and eyes with their hearts to God, they should return thanks *." The spirit of prayer characterizes the people, though they may hold in their hands no new manuals. Experience shows that no men love the divine office more intensely than the poor. "If the ear does not understand," say they, "the soul does." See them kneeling even before the little chapels on the trunks of trees round which they hang wreaths of flowers, stopping to salute the image of the saint best known in that country, who seems to smile down upon them from the oak, or pausing on their journey to enter each oratory by the way side, with the devotion of holy Pontiffs, like Celestin V., who, when visiting Mount Cassino in 1294, stopped thus to pray in the chapel of the Holy Cross through reverence for St. Benedict who had there wrought miracles, and gave an indulgence for ever to all who enter it and say a Pater and an Ave. See them supporting with their alms every holy work. "Some one is sure to pass by here at last," says a man whom robbers have left bound to a tree in a forest in Calderon's Devotion to the Cross: "if no muleteer should come, there will be some travelling student or some santera," that is, charitable asker of alms, a woman who begs for the nearest hermitage—for persons of this kind go about the country with an image of the saint, and ask an offering for the support of the hermitage. Do we find them travelling, or reposing, or taking their meals upon the ground under the noon-day sun?

"Et cantu querulæ rumpent arbusta cicadæ:"—

"Now shines upon the forest one vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms. There hugh caves,
Scoped in the dark base of those aëry rocks,
Mocking its moans, respond and roar for ever."

The man of little faith or of little familiarity with what the Church desires, or the man of choice in what he believes, is there too perhaps, and sees with astonishment the sudden rising and the tracing of the cross, as a prelude to the angelic salutation. It is not through fear of awakening Pan that he refuses to sing thus the Angelus at noon †. It is simply that he has not had the holy training of the peasant, nor heard of the great purposes to which the practice of the Angelus has in every age been made to minister ‡.

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* Cap. Theod. 20 Con. Gall. T. ii. 218.

† Theoc. ii.

‡ De la Cerda, De excellentia Cœlest. spirit. c. 45.

But see how the people love and transmit every thing pertaining to the Catholic Church, feeling, as they do so profoundly, the certainty of what St. Francis of Assisi says in his memorable epistle to all the faithful of Jesus Christ, respecting the duty of honouring churches, and priests, and all holy things, "Et firmiter sciamus omnes quod nemo salvari potest nisi per sancta verba et sanguinem Domini nostri Jesu Christi quæ clerici dicunt, annuntiant, et administrant, et ipsi soli ministrare debent." Accordingly that priest who serves this rustic chapel is supported by their offerings—that Church itself was built by their alms—that oratory, with an image of the blessed Virgin on the banks of rivers, consecrated by such solemn prayers for deliverance by her intercession from inundations, as we may witness near the Loire, was raised by their gratuitous labour—that little sanctuary in a desert place, with all its treasure of ex voto's, and massive silver plate and holy pictures, is under their protection. Open at all hours of the day, as that chapel of Jesus flagellé, near Boulogne, it is the peasant in the neighbouring cottage that keeps the key during the night, the peasants being its guardians ever; that lamp, that lighted taper which you find at every shrine, is kept burning by them, so faithful are they in the least things to ancient usages springing from reverence; and no usage is more ancient than this; for Sophronius says, that a lighted lamp used to burn before a picture in the cell of a solitary hermit, and there are very ancient verses which describe the impression of a devout pilgrim on seeing the lamp burning before the image of St. Martin in the city of Ravenna *. The forest of tapers at the side chapel are their offering; and the lights in procession borne, not less pious because they can be described in the Virgilian line—

——————— "lucet via longo
Ordine flammarum, et late discriminat agros †"—

are furnished by their collections, while they encourage each other, saying with St. Bonaventura, "Venite, ambulemus in lumine Dei nostri; ne frustra lumen humanum in manibus portemus ‡." The cross upon the wold or in the public places, to which the poet makes allusion where he says of one, "She doth stray about by holy crosses, where she kneels and prays," is under their safeguard; and the persecutors of our day in France, with legions at command, through fear of the people dare not lay their hand on it. Let us pause again here, and mark the popular devotion to the cross. We have observed already, that

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* Molanus, hist. S. Imag. ii.

† Æn. ix. 143.

‡ De Purific. b. Mariæ, Serm. i.

the traveller meets every where with the image of the cross recalling primitive Christianity. Rufinus says, that at Alexandria every one had the cross painted on his door-posts and windows, walls and columns*. "I desire," says Cardinal Palæotus, "that in private houses there should be a thousand crosses, 'et in vulgari domo mille cruces figi,' as the Bishop Nilus said in ancient times†." "For having our Lord always before our eyes," says St. Pachomius, "we continually are reminded of the passion of his cross and of his death, by whom we are redeemed and made alive‡."

The popular conviction respecting the efficacy of the symbol is expressed in the prose for the Invention of the Cross ascribed to Adam of St. Victor,—

"Non sunt nova sacramenta,
Nec recenter est inventa,
  Crucis hæc religio.
Ista dulces aquas fecit,
Per hanc silex aquas jecit,
  Moysis officio.

Nulla salus est in domo,
Nisi cruce munit homo,
  Super liminaria;
Neque sensit gladium,
Nec amisit filium,
  Quisquis egit talia."

But the popular devotion to the cross had other modes of expression; "For," as Rupertus says, "nothing is more frequently heard than,—prodeuntia vexilla regis, fulgidumque mysterium crucis§:" and the same holy abbot proceeds to give utterance to the thoughts of faith, in relation to the cross, of which every prayer referring to it, printed for the peasants now on the coarse brown paper, which kindles such suspicion in the refined modern traveller who picks it up by chance, was but the echo. "Let us adore," he says, "the cross of Christ; for the cross is the guardian of faith, the firmament of hope, the soil of charity, the title of mercy, the argument of piety, the bond of grace, the standard of peace. Let us adore the cross which overthrows pride, extirpates envy, corrects sin, cancels punishment. The cross of Christ is the gate of heaven, the key of Paradise, the overthrow of the devil, the creation of man, the comfort of our captivity, the price of freedom. The cross is the expectation of

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* Lib. xi. c. 29.
† Gab. Palæot. de Imag. Sac. lib. ii. 30.
‡ Monita S. Pachomii ap. Luc. Holstein. Codex Reg.
§ Rupert. Abb. De divinis officiis, lib. v. c. 1.

patriarchs, the promise of prophets, the triumph of kings, the dignity of priests. The cross confounds tyrants, bends the powerful, raises the afflicted, honours the poor. The cross is the expulsion of darkness, the infusion of light, the escape from death, the ship of life, the empire of salvation. Whatever step in advance we make towards God, whatever we acquire, whatever we hope for, is the fruit of adoring the cross. By the cross Christ draws all things to Himself; it is the kingdom of the Father, the sceptre of the Son, the seal of the Holy Ghost, the testament of the whole blessed Trinity [*]." Oh, with what hymns does the popular devotion at this passage salute the attentive ear! Oh, with what faithful love do the people practise what they sing! Well did St. Bonaventura know them, when he composed his praise of the holy cross, which to this hour supplies the key to unlock the secret recesses of the popular heart—

"Ama crucem mundi lucem,
Et habebis Christus ducem,
   Per æterna sæcula.
Illud pactum non sit fractum,
Crux præcedat omnem actum,
   Ut succedant prospera.

Cum tentatus et afflictus,
Derelictus quasi victus,
   Et inter angustias;
Non sis piger neque lentus,
Sed sollicite intentus,
   Cruce frontem munias.

Cum quiescis aut laboras,
Quando rides, quando ploras,
   Doles, sive gaudeas,
Quando vadis, quando venis,
In solatiis, in pœnis,
   Crucem corde teneas.

Crux est porta Paradisi,
In qua sancti sunt confisi
   Qui vicerunt omnia.
Crux est vita beatorum,
Et thesaurus perfectorum,
   Et decor, et gaudium.

Quando sedes, stas, et jaces,
Quando loqueris et taces,
   Fessus cum quieveris,
Christum quæras in quo speras,
Crucifixum corde geras,
   Ubicumque fueris.

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[*] De Divinis Officiis, lib. vi. c. 21.

Recordare paupertatis,
Et extremæ vilitatis,
Et gravis supplicii;
Si es compos rationis,
Esto memor passionis,
Fellis et absinthii.

Bone frater, quidquid agas,
Crucifixi vide plagas,
Et sibi compatere.
Da dolorem quasi rorem,
Ut te plorem Redemptorem,
Christum qui te renoves *."

These thoughts breathe in the great dramas which Catholic poets framed to charm the people. When Friar Buyl first plants the cross on the new world, Columbus and his companions are represented by Lopez de Vega thus saluting it: "Glorious and holy bed on which our God was stretched. Thou art the noble banner raised against sin by Him who, in dying, conquered death and gave us life; and still on thy wood I mark the traces of thy sacred blood. Indestructible mast of the vessel of the Church, that mountest to heaven like the mystic ladder of Jacob, thou hast for sail the shroud which enveloped the body of the God-man; and no pilot can ever equal the great Priest who guideth thee! Divine rod of Moses that dividest the Red Sea, bright flaming beacon that guidest man in his march, I plant thee, not without trembling, on this land, which is unworthy of thee, since it knoweth not the true God! Verdant palm of victory, on which the head of Christ is placed appearing in a new world, purify it from idolatry, for thou art stained with the blood which flowed for all men! Melodious harp of David, on which was dolorously fixed him whose coming thou didst prophesy, and on which the holy King did chant that melancholy music which afflicted Heaven, convert to faith by thy strains all this barbarous pole! Vessel on which life didst traverse the sea of death, in abdicating the attributes of divinity and becoming man—garment still red with the innocent blood of the new Joseph for whom Mary wept, glorious and venerated garment, be our guide and our banner amidst these savage tribes." The cross thus scattered over the whole scenery of the world, thus commemorated in lofty hymns, and even in the dramas of the poets, is after all an image, not alone of the great mystery of redemption, but also of the popular mind, wherever faith continues to predominate. The passion of Christ recurs to the memory of the people under every form; and Father d'Avila is as much an observer as an admonisher of

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* S. Bonav. Laudismus de S. Cruce.

his beloved Spain when he divides the week into its stages. "On Monday they thought of our Lord's agony in the garden, and what passed in the house of Anna and Caiphas; on Tuesday of the accusations, of the removal from judge to judge, and of the flagellation; on Wednesday of the crowning with thorns, and the mockery; on Thursday of the washing of the feet, of the blessed Eucharist, in honour of which, unconsciously, the bells are still rung that day in England; on Friday of the sentence, the carrying of the cross, the crucifixion and death; on Saturday of the piercing of the side, the taking down from the cross, the burial, and the grief of the blessed Virgin; on Sunday of the resurrection and the state of future glory*." Therefore, in the curious work, translated into old French by brother Pierre Ferget, entitled, "Procès entre Bélial et Jésus," the blessed Virgin is represented saying to her Divine Son, "Though bad Christians have sinned, yet the Jews who crucified Thee sinned far more, and yet on the cross Thou didst pray for them, saying, 'Pater, ignosce eis;' much more then oughtest Thou not to pardon thy poor Christians, who always have felt sorrow for thy passion, and have honoured me for the sake of thy honour†." This allusion to the sorrow of the people, for the passion of the Saviour, is justified by history; and the ancient hymn on the festival of the Seven Dolours, attesting a grief which grew out of it, leaves us to collect an affecting instance—

"Sit quinque Jesu vulnerum
Amara contemplatio,
Sint et dolores Virginis,
Æterna cunctis gaudia‡."

Truly the people, as St. Bonaventura desired, obtained the gift of sorrowful sympathy with the Saviour on his cross. Inured to suffering, it is no surprise for them to hear, as Rupertus says, that there is cause for sadness even in the very subject which constitutes their glory and their joy, namely, in the cross of Christ. "For," as he observes, "in the first place our conscience accuses us, since it was for us and our sins that He was betrayed, and therefore we ought to grieve at having been the cause of the death of such a Lord; for as not to rejoice would be ungrateful, so not to grieve would be cruel; for the foresight and ordination of God are not the same, God indeed having foreseen the fall of man in creating him, but having preordained his restoration§." Again, communication with the

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* Œuvres Spirit. d'Avila.

† p. 295.

‡ Hymnodia Hispanica, 337.

§ De Divinis Officiis, vi. c. 2.

people leads also to communication with the saints, whose names, histories, virtues, and festivals, are familiar to them. In the society of the rich and powerful the theme of conversation is often that "whereof in hell fame is not silent :" the people are more attached to the blessed memories of the Catholic Church; and accordingly at the deplorable epoch, when emperors and republics, magistrates and philosophers, conspired to scatter and efface the monuments that were to transmit to posterity the original histories of the saints, it was simple farmers, illiterate and poor peasants, who gave shelter under their cottage roofs to the manuscripts of the Bollandists, which the Jesuits of the present day have recovered, intending to resume the immense enterprise, and having indeed already added another volume.

The influence of the popular veneration has spread so wide that the Père Cahier, alluding to the martyrdom of St. Laurence, says, "One must have had nearly a Pagan education, not to have in memory the chief traits of the life and passion of the canonized saints of the Church. So many of the holy fathers have rivalled each other in zeal to celebrate the magnanimity of the Christian hero, St. Laurence, so much solemnity has been given to his festival in the Church, such grandeur shines in his last moments, that the world has been a long time filled with the enthusiasm inspired by his manly courage. Hence his name is one of those which the affection of the people has at length rendered in the estimation of some of the higher ranks, 'almost too common ;' so that those who desire to be classed among persons of distinction, are unwilling that their children should any longer bear it ;—curious instance of extending the influence of fashion even to the patronage of the saints *!" The people had other thoughts in regard to the relation in which they should stand to the friends of God, and so their baptismal names continue to transmit the old veneration. "At this day," says St. Augustin, "what region, what province, what spot, which the Roman or Christian name has ever reached, does not rejoice to celebrate the natal festival of Vincent †?" What shall we say of the popular reverence for St. Martin, St. Dunstan, St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Boniface, St. Anthony of Padua, on whose anniversaries the people, with one voice, proclaim the way—

> "Nos igitur patriæ memores cui vivimus, ad quam
> Tendimus ; hos tantos læti celebremus honores !"

The traveller who meets Catholic Christians for the first time, as unknown strangers, observing this devotion, may naturally be

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* Monographie de Bourges, 267.

† Serm. 276.

led to make some reflections like those of a recent poet, who exclaims, referring to a land which had renounced it—

> "What, if it be through scanty awe for God
> That we due honour from his saints withhold?
> ———— If we be fellow-citizens
> With them, there is a reverence to be paid,
> Wholly distinguishable in the mind,
> Of child-like love from aught of worship paid
> To Him who is, and was, and is to come *."

Truly it may be believed so. The very caution sounds ridiculous to faithful ears. "God," says St. Bruno, "can assist us without the saints; but they cannot without God †." The people loving, according to the old expressions, to praise Christ in blessed Martin and other saints ‡, know this axiom well; and the very part which they ascribe to the latter, in attending to their prayers, can indicate how deeply they appreciate the cause which renders the invocation of the saints useful; for, to take only an example out of the common way, why was St. Anthony of Padua invoked to recover things that were lost? Antonio de Escobar replies, that it was for this reason,—when a youth, on entering the order of St. Francis, he sought to lie hid from his parents by changing his name from Ferdinand to Anthony; so that when his parents sought him, they could not find him. Therefore he who studied not to be found to the glory of God, received that gift from God, that by his intercession things lost should be found §. Why was "ma dame" St. Geneviève believed to be so often an efficacious intercessor? The reason may be found in the simple fact of her loving our Lord with such surpassing affection, which is alluded to in one of the gracious anthems of the ancient office of the saint, as sung in the middle ages in the churches of Paris—"Ex quo sanctus Antistes dedit mihi cœlestem calculum, delectata sum in solo Christo, sicut in omnibus divitiis." Why, again, was St. Anne so fervently invoked? The beautiful prayers addressed to her, collected by Trithemius, imply the same deep and pious appreciations of what constitutes power with God, as in the words, "Commendes puero quem pia castitas natæ parturiit, nos prece poscimus, O matrona beata: Christus nil tibi denegat ||." Moreover, the prayers addressed to the saints are so worded, that it is impossible to repeat them without being reminded of the virtues that are indispensable for rendering available their intercession. As blessed Louis, the Confessor King, had despised

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* Morris.

† S. Brunonis Exposit. in Ps. cxvii.

‡ De Gest. Epist. Turon.

§ In Evang. Comment. tom. vii. 186.

|| De Laudibus S. Annæ.

the blandishments of the world, and studied to please Christ alone, so men implore God to grant that his prayers may render them acceptable to Him through Jesus Christ their Lord *. After the calamities of these last times, how affecting are the ancient Spanish hymns which attest the close connexion that is believed to exist between the invocation of the national saints and the moral greatness of the Spanish people, as in that on the festival of St. Ildefonso—

"Fac, regnis vigeat sparsa patentibus
Inconcussa fides, almaque charitas
Hispanoque nocentes
Cedant orbe cupidines!"—

and that on the feast of St. Isidore, alluding to his prediction—

"Si scelus laxis dominans habenis
Impium mentes trahat in furorem,
Ultor instabit Deus, et Gothorum
Eruet urbes—
Hispalis clarum jubar Isidore,
Redde virtutes, vitiis repulsis,
Fac et ad priscos redeant caduca
Secula mores!"—

and that on the feast of SS. Jusia and Ruffina, sisters and martyrs of Seville—

"Salvete claræ virgines,
Tutela præsens patriæ,
Virtutis et constantiæ
Exemplar admirabile †!"

The popular devotion of the saints being inseparably associated with the cultivation of the graces which had made them saints, might therefore be said to remove a thousand obstacles from the way which could prevent men from advancing to the Catholic Church. The people know that the saints are magnified, and even canonized, for the sake of men on earth, and not through the insane delusion which mocking heretics suppose. "The saints who are in heaven, and already known to the triumphant Church, where they have true and eternal honour before God and his angels, are not solicitous," as Marina de Escobar says, "for that honour which can accrue to them from canonization in the Church militant, committing themselves to the Providence of God, who directs all things to his glory and the good of his faithful ‡." They are announced to the world as

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* Mass of St. Louis. † Faust. Areval. Hymnodia Hispanica.
‡ Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. i. c. 18.

examples; and hence, at the last festival of a canonization at Rome, the words inscribed were these—

"Vos queis animum, aut festus, aut
Ira, aut cupido
Miserè lacerat,
Ad aram cœlitum noventilium
Vota facite:
Modestia, benignitas, honestas, etiam pauperies
In delicijs vobis erunt
Pueri, Puellæ,
Et quibus animus integer, purus
Cœlitum noventilium
Qui vobis præstant exempla, reminiscamini:
Pietas, caritas, et omnis virtutum cohors
Vos etiam sideribus inferant."

The solemn intellectual ceremonies connected with the saints, which occur at repeated intervals, familiarizing the minds of the people with the paramount importance of the interests of the future life, yield evidence that the Church possesses the true secret of directing well the human race. Those which took place in 1627, at Saltsbourg, at the translation of the relics of St. Rupert, in which the arts were so admirably employed to assist the popular devotion, produced such deep and lasting impressions, that a minute description of them is given by Ypes in his general chronicle of the Benedictine Order. "The triumphal arches were covered with paintings, which represented the whole history of that apostolic man. On one gate Justice stood holding a balance, with this motto, 'In mea libra soli Sancti pondus habent.' No one could reckon all the counts, barons, and other nobles who attended through a religious motive; but the people were actors in the solemn scene. All the trades, under their respective banners, followed. There was no one in the neighbouring towns and villages who did not consider that he had more business that day at Saltsbourg than at his own home*." This leaving home for a heavenly object, this urgent business to be transacted, as it were, in certain churches, which can take men for a time from their farms and their oxen, from their fields and barns, their houses and their housekeeping, presents an issue through which observers can easily pass to a discovery of the truth of that religion which perpetuates the manners of the first Christians, and creates an attraction supernatural in its origin and spiritual in its results. Now are we passed by some from whom the great Dante borrows that similitude, saying,

——— "as on their road
The thoughtful pilgrims, overtaking some

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* Ant. de Ypes Montserrat. Chron. Gen. Ord. S. Ben. tom. ii. 29—35.

Not known to them, turn to them, and look,
But stay not; thus, approaching from behind
With speedier motion, eyed us, as they pass'd,
A crowd of spirits *."

Here then are the pilgrims, composed chiefly of the lower classes now; for though some of the great are always found amongst them, the majority is always formed of those who are under the popular influence. In the thirteenth century, for instance, mark what men are supposed to be accustomed to such journeys. "If any fisherman of the Seine of Paris," says the old ordinance, "be on his way beyond sea, or on the way of Monseigneur Saint-Jasques, or at Rome, his wife or son may exercise the trade till the certainty be known of his death, or life, or return †." "Every crier of Paris is to pay daily to the confraternity of merchants one denier, excepting on Sundays, or when he is sick, or when he goes on pilgrimage to St. James, or beyond sea; and before setting out he must make known his intention on taking leave, in the parloir au bourgeois ‡." The peasant, the artizan, the labourer, with their mothers, wives, and daughters, such are the persons who still in greatest numbers repair devoutly to the holy shrine. The considerations and perils that frequently rendered the higher classes less disposed for undertaking a pilgrimage, can be collected from a curious letter of Sidonius, who presses them on his friend's attention in these terms:—"It is," he says, "in the heart of the prudent to avoid fortuitous things; but also, when events do contradict audacious hopes, to refrain from complaints, and from converting the results of imprudence to a ground of accusation. Why do I say this? I confess it is because I fear lest you should not fear in times of public fear—Ne tempore timoris publici non timeres; and lest the security of a solid house, until our age unshaken, should be overthrown by the invasion of the enemy, and that the desired solemnity should begin to be despised with the tenderness of matronal minds, although in their breasts sanctity has so peculiarly its dwelling, that if any thing adverse should happen by the way, it might be said that they suffered martyrdom for a martyr:—ast ego cui majorem diffidentiam minor innocentia facit, willingly adhere to a more cautious council. It was well to defer so doubtful a journey—neque intra jactum tantæ aleæ, status tantæ familiæ fuit. And though the journey might have prospered, yet I would never give a white ball to the proposal, the rashness of which could only be pardoned by the benefit of felicity. Reserve these vows for better times, when amidst the sweetness

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* Purg. 23.

† Etienne Boileau, Le Livre des Métiers, tit. xcix.

‡ Id. tit. v.

of peace one can recollect these terrors, but let present things render cautious those whom the future may make secure *."

The poor, and the people generally, who would hardly even understand such language, have fewer dangers; and the ways to the shrine, even in the most difficult times, are thronged with them. The moral effects can only be denied by men whose incredulity would invalidate all human testimony. Let it suffice here to cite, in proof, an instance which is both mystical and historical; for experience demonstrated that the former view was conformable to facts. "St. Gertrude, on the festival of St. James, beheld in a vision the glorious Apostle, adorned with the merits of all the pilgrims to his shrine; and on inquiring why he should be distinguished by this concourse of strangers to his tomb, she received answer, that it was on account of his fervent zeal and love for the salvation of souls; and since by eternal predestination he was so quickly removed from the body, that he could not convert the multitude which he desired, therefore his good will always flourishing before God, it is granted to him, that what he could not effect while living, he might be able to accomplish in after ages, namely, that multitudes, from generation to generation, should be converted by visiting his tomb, being absolved from their sins, and strengthened in the Catholic faith †." The pilgrimage is fraught with directions for the thoughtful heart; but we cannot delay here to specify them. Let the fervent crowd move on, enduring all things, making the common road of travellers a true way to the glorious capital of the supernal citizens, from which the people know themselves to be exiles, but not wholly cut off. We must be content with this transient glimpse at the bearers of the cockle hat, and remain behind to examine the other pointing signals which are furnished by the pious practices and spirit of a Catholic population.

In consequence of the popular devotion, no traveller at inns, in boats, or on the way, who has ever been where bells undesecrated have knolled to church, can long remain ignorant of the annual festivals of the Catholic religion, though at first he may come to them with a malicious face, to fleer and scorn at the solemnity, regarding them only in the light of those singularities of which he ought to render an account on returning to a country where they are unknown. Northern travellers generally allude to these Catholic usages in the style with which the Gentile philosopher speaks of the ceremonies of his time, as in the first lines of the Republic, where Plato says, "I was going yesterday to the Piræus, to see in what manner the festival passed;" and Polemarque observes, "There will be a religious vigil, which

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* Sidon. Apoll. Epist. lib. iii. 6.

† Insinuationes div. Pietatis S. Gertrudis Abb. lib. iv. c. 49.

will be worth seeing*." It will be a curious spectacle, they say; and so their very choice ones hasten to it. Alas! their scrutiny has often sad ulterior ends; for their dislikes, to whom we would be pleasing, do cloud our joys with danger and with sorrow. However, be that as it may, attention is sure to be excited by various customs of popular life, associated with what takes place in the Church; and we may observe, too, that these usages are so clear in their direction to Catholicity, that the least attempt to imitate them elsewhere is regarded as bringing back the Catholic faith, as among certain parishioners of late in England, who, merely for singing carols and carrying lights at Christmas, were accused to their highest authority of Popish propensities. Observing first what meets the eye on passing your threshold, the dress of the people has a religious signification. "Passé la feste, le fol en blanc reste," says the old French proverb†. The dress is for the day, not the day for the dress. "Why are all the people on the Savoy side of the lake so gaily clad this morning?" asked a Scotch passenger in the boat which plies between Vevey and Geneva; whose countenance expressed amaze, as if some new horror were brought to light, on hearing from the man at the helm that it was the festival of our Lady of September, and therefore that the Catholic people wore their holiday suits. He looked still as if he saw some comet or portentous prodigy; but the impression may have yielded that poor man, ere now, salutary fruits. The people generally observe those distinctions of dress on festivals, which were prescribed formerly to all classes, as to the knights of the order of the Band in Spain, who, as Guevara mentions, were enjoined to wear silk on such days, and at Easter and Pentecost rings, or some golden ornaments of elegance, which custom St. Leo commends, saying that "it is reasonable, and even in some sense religious, to clothe oneself, on a festival, in a more handsome attire, to show the cheerfulness of the mind by the habit of the body‡." Sir Thomas More would put on festile apparel on a festival, even when alone in his prison, saying, that he did it to honour God. The son of the poorest Catholic, who on common occasions might seem a very monster in apparel, would give no witty Biondello cause, upon a holyday, for saying that he was not like a Christian footboy. The vigil, again, is indicated by the fast or abstinence, of which at least some trace will be found everywhere, though it might be only in the master of the inn, as I once observed in Germany, who gave so strict an example to his guests of distinguishing the Saturday, that one might have thought he

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* De Repub. i.

† Le Roux de Lincy, Liv. des Prov. Fr.

‡ De Guad. Serm. 2, 3.

had heard with his own ears St. Thomas Aquinas saying, "Servamus Sabbatum in veneratione Virginis gloriosæ, in quâ remansit tota fides tali die in morte Christi[*]." It is recorded of the shepherdess of Nanterre, that she used to watch the whole night between Saturday and Sunday, according to the custom of the primitive Christians[†]; and indeed the popular saying, "Tel rit le vendredi, qui Dimanche pleurera[‡]," indicates how well the people enter into the spirit of the Catholic Church in regard to the difference and religious observance of days; whereas, in the upper ranks, at present there would be little offence taken at keeping Friday as a sort of holiday, as in the reign of James the First. "In all English houses," says the biographer of a Spanish lady who came into England at that time, "all kinds of meat are seen on Fridays, Good-Friday not excepted, as if it were a land of Jews or Turks. The nobles in particular reserve their feasts, and entertainments of all kinds, of meats and delicacies, for Fridays. It is the sport of the great, and their sort of piety, to testify by these sacrileges their hatred to the Roman Church." At this day the upper ranks take a pride in showing how little respect they attach to the popular opinion respecting Fridays, and how they luxuriate in the dispensations for the Saturday, which enable them to feast while their Lord is in the grave. An old writer remarks, that the Irish people of the common class, in whose language Thursday was called "dia Dardaine," the day between two fasts, regarded with horror the relaxation which crept in with regard to the fast of Wednesday and Friday, and that they adhered to the ancient abstinence of the three days each week. He relates that a certain herdsman, who happened to be in the house of a prelate who had long lived in London, could not be persuaded to eat meat on the Wednesday, and that when he heard that the commands of the bishop had come for him to eat it, he replied, that, quoad jejunium, he would not trust the Bishop of London, for he was convinced that fasting was in no favour with any one who had lived long in London[§]. Moreover, the people know nothing of the dispensations and privileges, and exemptions which are so familiar to the higher classes, who seem to remember only the abuses consequent on certain concessions to the military orders of Spain, and to heed not the bull of Pope St. Pius V., who took from them the powers that they would now pretend were perpetual. Thrown amongst the people, therefore, the

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[*] S. Thom. Opuscul. iv.

[†] Vita.Stæ Genovefæ, xx.

[‡] Le Roux de Lincy, Livre des Prov. Fr.

[§] "Nimirum credebat jejunium in desuetudinem abiisse apud quenquam diu Londini moratum."—Roderic O'Flaherty, Ogygia, seu Rer. Hibernic. Chronologia, p. iii. c. 62.

vigil forces itself upon the traveller's attention at his meals. The feast weaves itself perforce into his business, as when deciding the hour of his departure, for no guide will serve him until he at least has heard mass ;—

> "Matutinus adest, Tyriaque in veste sacerdos
> Fert manibus calices : genibus procumbite flexis ;
> Sancta dies sanctæ debet succedere nocti *."

Various popular customs, belonging to each season of the ecclesiastical year, must seem, in the estimation of uninformed observers, to challenge investigation. Sister De Changy, in her memoirs of St. Jane, mentions an instance. "Our blessed Mother," she says, "arrived from her long journey to Paris and Orleans, in this monastery of Anneci, on Allhallows Eve, just in time to draw the beatitudes, that of the clean of heart falling to her, on which she said that our Lord signified to her to review her conscience after the journey and the business that had occupied her †." Of the succeeding solemnity of All Souls, Baptist the Mantuan sings—

> "Et paribus studiis urbes ac rura parentant ‡."

Men would follow the multitude, attracted by the vast conflux, to the cemetery, and see them kneel on graves which have always some great Catholic lesson to whisper to the soul. On the other hand, the exuberant joy that pervades the population on the other anniversaries, called solemn from occurring once only in the year, must strike every one. The words of the Church in the prayer for vespers or holy Saturday,—"Ut quos sacramentis Paschalibus satiasti,"—as if the mere anticipation amounted to fulness, can indicate how great was the rejoicing of her devout people. No one could be blind to this signal. Baptist the Mantuan describes it thus,—

> "Corda, manus, oculos, plantas, linguamque movebat
> Christus, et in cunctis (ita conciliaverat illos
> Disciplina vigil sanctique industria patris)
> Spiritus unus erat. Quotiens ad templa vocabat
> Festa dies, aderant curis civilibus omnes
> Protinus exclusis, tota cum plebe senatus,
> Matronæ cum virginibus, cum pube senectus §."

We may conceive how difficult it would be to impede the holy zeal of the population to honour God upon the festival, when even kings discarded every consideration of personal inconveni-

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[*] Bapt. Mant. de Sac. Diebus.

[†] Chap. 21.

[‡] De Sacris Diebus.

[§] Id.

ence, as when Philip II. said of assisting bareheaded at the procession of Corpus Christi, that "on such a day the sun cannot hurt any one,"—words that passed into a proverb. Even, on the nativity of St. John the Baptist, the later Mantuan says,—

> "Serviles faciunt operas cessare—
> Jura silent ; sileant et jurgia ; religioque
> Floreat ; et primæ pax et concordia vitæ *."

We may judge then of the external demonstration to which the greater festivals gave rise. In the year 845, the Fathers, assembled in the Council of Meaux, spoke thus :—"We decree that during the eight days of the sacrosanct Paschal solemnity all Christians shall refrain from every rural work, as also from exercising trade of any description, whether of masons, carpenters, plasterers, modellers in gypsum, painters, hunters, merchants, or lawyers, and from receiving or making judicial oaths †." By another Council, however, it was permitted before mass on the festivals of Easter week to plough and sow or dig in a garden ; but after mass all work was to cease ‡. It would be long to speak of the striking and attractive usages of the people in different countries associated with religious festivals. The fires on St. John's eve leave no belated traveller in ignorance of that mysterious nativity, when, as at Christmas, three masses used to be said by each priest §, and many still rejoiced.

In Provence there is a chapel within a forest to which on that eve multitudes, following the chief magistrate of the place, repair, to hold a vigil ; those who carry the image of the saint running : the women remain within, the men without the Church, no one being allowed to sleep. After the mass next morning, at which all communicate, the whole assembly forms an immense circle on the green sward, and holding hands, each pronounces a salutation, saying to God, Till this day next year ; and then all separate and return to their homes. The quaint old fancies of a fervent age conspire also sometimes to surprise those who go wandering about the world. Thus, during the midnight mass of Christmas, they might find perhaps that no one was allowed to go into the stable ; for there was a popular idea that animals, as if mindful of what the ox and ass beheld, evinced respect at each anniversary of the birth of Christ, and that the curiosity which would seek to verify it was criminal ‖. Merely profane usages used to be transformed into a pious homage ; as when by the youth Suso the serenade of New Year's Day was

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[*] De Sacris Diebus.

[†] Cap. 77, ap. Molani Hist. SS. Im.

[‡] Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 173.

[§] Marchantius, Triumphus S. Joan. Bapt. 33.

[‖] La Normandie Romanesque et Merveilleuse.

changed into a salutation before dawn of the Blessed Virgin, at whose image he offered flowers, and the green branch borne on the first of May into a cross as the most beautiful of all the trees of the wood *. At Talavera there is an ancient association of gentlemen called the Hermandad de los Cavalleros de la Virgen del Prado, who had made a vow in their own names and in those of their successors to appear on horseback, dressed in blue and white, every year on the festivals celebrated in honour of our Lady del Prado, and so mounted to accompany the procession.

Having observed thus how the attention of those who are even aliens to the Church can be awakened by the popular movement on each Catholic festival, let us proceed to mark how clearly this manifestation by the people points to the true centre, where for every man is the rest and joy of an eternal festivity.

If there was nothing in the Catholic holiday but what the traveller remarks in passing thus through the earnest multitude, we might indeed be taxed with partiality in affirming that it yielded direction to the human mind on its great quest after divine truth ; for the world, in blindness and idolatry lost, had also its religious anniversaries, which were associated with popular usages that could excite the curiosity of those who were inquisitive observers of mankind ; though still I must remark that it would be insane to confound things essentially dissimilar, and pretend like some superserviceable scribes of modern established fooleries, that the world had witnessed only a change of form in the institutions to which Catholicity has led ;—

"Impia sustulerat pius omnia sanguine Christus
Festa : quibus lusit secula prisca Jovis,
Vana superstitio sani cesserat, et bona toto
Relligio verum sparserat orbe Deum †."

The commemorations of the Saints belong not to a new order of mythological ideas, according to the absurd phraseology of these writers, but they are visible manifestations of ancient facts, attesting the power of divine grace in the Catholic Church, and directing us to follow them by an imitation of their faith and virtues, which are held up to us for that reason, as in the instance of St. Sebastian, of whom Baptist says,—

"Mox ubi percepit Christi mysteria, duxit
Cœlestem in terris, hoc est sine crimine vitam ‡ ;"

and in that of St. Agnes, of whom the same poet says,—

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* Vita ejus.

† Bapt. Mant. de Sacris Diebus.

‡ Id.

"Quæ cupitis matres sexus utriusque juventam,
Vulnificos cœci vitare Cupidinis arcus,
Et castam servare domum celebrate puellam,
Hanc ornate diem. Diva hæc juvenilia sanctis,
Corda ligat studiis: frenumque imponit amori *."

Hence St. Gregory exclaims, "Lo! how many stars shine in the heavens, in order that we may walk securely through the night of this life; for to the instruction of man the divine dispensation exhibits the just as so many stars shining amidst the darkness of sinners †."

"The offices instituted for the course of the year are designed," says Rupert, "to show forth what is taught in the Holy Scriptures; for they are signs of the loftiest things, ordained by religious and learned men, in honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church, faithfully and wisely framed to set forth the sacraments of his incarnation, nativity, passion, resurrection, and ascension ‡." "As nocturnal fires appear from some port to those who are traversing the sea far from land, so," says Petrarch, "do the symbols of the other life visit my sad eyes." These Catholic symbols, familiar to the people, are all relative to the world's Redeemer. "The fruit," says St. Bruno, "is Christ, of whom is every festival, and without whom no festival can be celebrated §." "The Pasch of Christ," says the Monk Evagrius, "is the passage from malice; his Pentecost is the resurrection of charity—the festival of God is the oblivion of evils ||."

But hear the Abbot Rupertus on holy Saturday. "O truly blessed night, the nobility of the year, the glory of months, the arms of days, the splendour of hours, in which hell is harrowed and Paradise opened—this night is the exit of death, the return of life, the light of grace, the splendour of glory, the cup of sweetness, the river of delights, the inundation of peace, the acquisition of fortitude, the praise of the divine counsels. In this night the exactor rests, tribute ceases, captives are delivered, the weary breathe, the rod of persecution is broken, the yoke of oppression falls. With the beauty of this night Paradise flowers again, the heavens wax purple, the angels shine in white, and men are exhilarated. This night is called the Pasch transitum, or which in Latin signifies the passage. What is this transit? Whence and whither is the passage? Who is it that passes? whence and whither does He pass? Christ our Lord passed from this world to the Father, from death to life, from shame to

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[*] Bapt. Mant. de Sacris Diebus.

[†] Præf. Moral. 10.

[‡] Rupert Abb. de Divinis Officiis, lib. i. 1.

[§] S. Brunonis de Ornatu Eccles. lib.

[||] Evagrii Monach. sententiæ.

glory, from servitude to a kingdom, from insults to honour, from the floods of the world to the port of heaven, from being between two thieves to the throne of his Father. We too have passed; for Christ is our Pasch, our passage—Christ is immolated. Whither then have we passed? From what distance? We have passed from twofold perdition to the twofold salvation of body and of soul—from the devil to God, from an enemy to our Father, from a tyrant, neither God nor man, to our King both God and man. We have passed, I say, from darkness to light, from weariness to rest, from lamentation to canticles of joy, from nakedness to cloathing, from poverty to opulence, from guilt to grace, from pain to glory *."

But the people are never dismissed without being positively directed to holiness. Even the solemn announcement to the multitude of indulgences, on the authority of the celebrating Pontiff, at the end of a joyous festival, teaches them that in all our rejoicing the Church requires us to keep in mind the great spiritual end of sanctification and eternal felicity.

Yet, such darkness do misguided men desire! Some would have extinguished these beacons, and overthrown these directing signals which have been set up in the forest of life. "Believe it, wondrous doctors," says the Arian poet of modern times, "all corporeal resemblances of inward holiness and beauty are now passed,"—words sufficiently peremptory, no doubt; though neither wondrous doctors nor the unlettered poor may feel constrained for all that to believe it at his invitation. What use a wiser poet would make of true and authoritative symbols, may be gathered from his timid appreciation of those which have no higher recommendation than their own natural fitness, saying,

"If the sad grave of human ignorance bear
One flower of hope, oh, pass, and leave it there!"

"Not all figures of the law," says Rupertus, "are abolished. Some are changed indeed by the fulfilment of prophecies; but moral figures so far from being reprobated are augmented by the evangelic ministry. In sayings and deeds the gospel is more beautiful than the law. Christ more frequently than any of the prophets proposes parables or allegoric similitudes; and the Church, follower of her Master, by the form of visible imitates invisible things, both in divine worship and in the adornment of her temples. Festive devotion shines forth everywhere, as far as the ability of the faithful permits, in gold and silver and precious stones, which in seculars are indications of ambition, but in ecclesiastical and divine things manifestations of piety. Not that God, who is a spirit, takes more pleasure in golden than

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* De Divinis Officiis, vi. c. 26.

earthen, in gemmed than in plain things, but because men, when they offer to God willingly what they love, and through the love of God part with it, render whatever it may be precious to God. For many love gold, which is the concupiscence of the flesh and of the eyes; and when they offer that to God, who needs it not, as David pouring the desired water to the Lord, without doubt their offering is holy and acceptable to Him *." The splendours of the festival are therefore proof of the love and reverence for spiritual things which reign within the Catholic Church; while her adversaries who disdain such treasures, excepting when they can put them into their own pockets, furnish proof, in the general wreck of truth and ancient manners, of the fatal consequences of suppressing this subordinate source of spiritual illumination.

Again, St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "That the union of the rich and poor constitutes the perfect festivity †." This union is found only in the Catholic Church. There only is that solemn and universal setting apart of particular days, in which all are alike directed to a great spiritual end, forgotten far less by the common flock of the people and the poor, than by the rich and great, including some wondrous doctors, who would leave the churches as empty as their own hearts. We find Dr. Bentley choosing Christmas-day for writing a long letter about the disputes in his college, and composing an elaborate apology for the part he took in them. Few belonging to his sect, if left to themselves, would be struck with this circumstance as evincing a direction of mind either singular or culpable. It is only in the Catholic communion that the festival of God, in honour of his Son, of his blessed Mother, and of his saints, draws to the Church men rich and poor, learned and simple, in the spirit of St. Paul, who would not stay any time in Asia, "for he hasted, if it were possible for him to keep the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem ‡." We read of king Henry III. resolving at Michaelmas, in 1257, to return to England in order to assist at the festival of St. Edward, at Westminster, which occurs a few days later §, so thoroughly did the popular festival enter into the positive business of life, even in the estimation of kings. In the Catholic Church alone are the great facts of the Christian religion commemorated thus, each year, with a faith and a simplicity that recal the shepherds at Bethlehem. Hear the ancient carol sung at Christmas by the people,—

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* De Divinis Officiis, lib. ii. c. 23.

† Lib. 9, in Joan.

‡ Acts xx.

§ Mat. Paris ad ann. 1251.

"Entrons dans la bergerie,
Où, pour nous sauver tous,
Jesus est né de Marie,
Chut, on dit qu'il fait dodo ;
Ni disons mot ;
Prends garde que les clous,
Gros Talebot,
Les clous, les clous, les clous
De tes sabots,
Les clous de tes sabots,
N'eveillent ce Petit ?"

In these great annual festivals which acquired every year only a fresh interest, from the change of mind consequent on the lapse of time, and from a consideration of the new personal sorrows and joys which are to be included in the celebration of the dolorous and joyful mysteries of our Redeemer, who bore all our sorrows and imparts all our joys, the people and the poor find the cheering and invigorating food that sustains the soul during its passage through the desert of this life, leaving an indelible memory and fulfilling the supplication of the Church at Easter,—"ut perceptio sacramenti continua in nostris mentibus perseveret." But even more than this is true ; for what pen has ever attempted to record the supernatural guidance which innumerable men have obtained by the practice, familiar with the people, of entering into the spirit of the Catholic Church at each recurring festival? We may be assured that to a certain extent they experience impressions in consequence, which resemble the graces that were vouchsafed to Marina de Escobar and to St. Gertrude. The former speaking of her astonishment at the sense of reality with which she saw pass before her, in the festivals, the mysterious events of the life of our Lord on earth, and of his blessed Mother, generalizes thus as if she believed that others often experienced it, saying, the soul is so surprised at the exact and forcible representation that it seems at first disturbed and moved to say, "What is this, O Lord, since that mystery was accomplished only once and not repeatedly* ?" Without attaining to such eminent illumination, multitudes too of the poor and unknown, from age to age, may be believed to share in the grace enjoyed by St. Gertrude when the whole circle of the year, each office of the saints, the Introits at mass, and the responses at vespers,—all contributed to impart to her celestial visions. Thus two words of a response on the Sunday,—Esto mihi, others on the procession of the Purification, and on the second Sunday of Lent, the response of the procession on the vigil of the annunciation, and after complin before the ascension, —the prayers on Christmas-day, on the Holy Innocents, on the

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. v. c. 27.

festivals of St. Maurice, of St. Mathieu, on the Sunday Reminiscere, on the Sunday Oculi, on that of Lætare, which were all known to the people by those very ecclesiastical terms,—the prayers on holy Wednesday, at the mass in nomine, the words on Good-Friday, after the Passion—oremus dilectissimi,—all sounded to her as if she actually heard them offered up with the voices of the whole Church. On Trinity Sunday the antiphon —osculetur me; the prayer on St. John the Baptist's Day, on SS. Peter and Paul, the words—si diligis me; on St. Margaret's Day, the words—virgo veneranda; and on that of St. Mary Magdalen, the office of the first vespers, and that of the assumption, conveyed an admirable sense surpassing all natural conception to her intelligence.

Such are the records respecting this sainted daughter of St. Benedict; but the unnamed devout people of the Church might relate their impressions too, as signals granted to them wholly supernatural, and often amounting to the clearness of a vision; for the universal cry that rises from the Catholic soil seems to be only an echo of her own emphatic words, "Beata illa patria*." The depth and clearness with which the common people of the Church penetrate into the subject, when estimating the relative importance of each festival, is another signal which proclaims one of the exclusive privileges conferred by the Catholic religion. Passavanti says, that the festival of the nativity of the blessed Virgin is not ancient, and that it was ordered to be celebrated solemnly, and with an octave, in consequence of certain miracles and revelations†. The festival of Corpus Christi had a similar origin; but how profoundly the people appreciated the wisdom and justice of such commemorations, the whole world was immediately called to witness. To the sanctification of St. John the Baptist, the first fruit of the incarnation of the Word, and whose festival was so dear to the multitude, the people remarked that the voice of Mary was the instrument, and, as it were, the sensible sign of the invisible operation of grace; and the Père de Ligny only expresses the popular impression, when he observes, "that it is a great ground of confidence in her to find thus her intervention in the first application which was made of the merits of Jesus Christ, after his incarnation, and in the sanctification of the holiest of those that have been born of women‡." Again, if the learned would understand with the people, and would estimate, as St. Bruno says, what glory the day of the Annunciation produced, they would count that day, as he says, above all the festivals of the whole year. For whatever may be the outcries of the upper classes against

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* Insin. div. piet. seu vita et revelat. S. Gertrudis abb. lib. iv.

† Specchio.

‡ Hist. de J. C.

the number of religious days, and the success of their intervention, "this," he says, "is the first of the festivals, this is the beginning and cause of all other festivals. Let us all then together," he continues, "celebrate this festival of festivals, and with Mary rejoice at such a great announcement *."

As far as the world is concerned, if it were not for the voice of a Catholic population, and the instinctive and admirable sense of religious propriety which characterizes the multitude of the poor, whom it would be imprudent to scandalize over much, the solemnity of the Annunciation, in regard to all external observance, like many others, would, in countries of little faith, very probably be consigned to oblivion; and motives of temporal convenience and of mere material proportion would prevail over the spiritual and eternal reason for its observance. Indeed where this voice is not heard, all praise and cordial approval will be reserved for acts of curtailment and abrogation. In an old mystery the people are represented speaking together on another festival, which would share the same fate if it were not through regard for their attachments. "It is time," says one neighbour, "to go to the Church. He is not a prud'homme who does not hear this day the holy service; for this is the day we celebrate—

"Comment au temple porté fu
De sa mère le doulx Jhesu,
Qui pour nous en croiz mort souffri,
Et comment pour li elle offri
Deux coulombiaux."

When another replies to him—

"C'est un des services plus biaux,
A mon gré, de toute l'année,
Allons-nous-ent sanz demourée;
L'Eglise est loine †."

But let us consider the direction yielded by the popular mind and manners in relation to the great day of continual recurrence, which the Church has substituted for the ancient Sabbath of the people of God. Truly attractive should the Catholic religion prove to the laborious multitude, from the consideration of its providing so carefully and judiciously for the repose, and instruction, and enjoyment of all classes; while the sophists, bound in secret league against the Church, take delight in seeing around them a savage and degraded population, whose sore task does

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* S. Bruno in Annun.

† Mirac. de Notre Dame, Mystères du moyen Age, par Monmerqué et Michel.

not divide the Sunday from the week. In the revelations of St. Bridget we find allusion to some who, even in her times, resembled them; for, speaking of certain abuses, our Saviour said to her, "Though labourers abstain from work on festivals, yet some rich men cease not to send their hired labourers on those days to work in their vineyards, to plough in their fields, to cut wood in their forests, and to carry it home, and thus the poor enjoy no more rest on those than on other days *." And Matthieu Paris relates, that "in the year 1200 a divine vision was said to have occurred at Jerusalem, to teach the better observance of the Sunday, the impression caused by which report being so great that France and England felt it, when in consequence Eustache de Flaix commenced his preaching to enforce the sanctification of the Lord's Day. In the middle ages Sundays and other festivals were observed without servile work, from vespers to vespers †." By a capitulary of Charlemagne the Sunday is ordered to be so observed. On Sundays all hunting was forbidden, and all legal and administrative proceeding ‡. The fathers of the council of Macon, in 588, observe that they only renew the ordinances of general councils respecting the exact observance of the Sunday,—"De observando die Dominico." The learned communities of the cloister were not to distinguish themselves from the vulgar in this respect. "On Sunday night," says one ancient rule, "through reverence for our Lord's resurrection, all work of the hands must cease §." "From nones on Saturday," says another monastic code, "all work is to cease till after the Sunday; but after the masses on Sunday, pro voluntate sua quis quid voluerit, aut delectatus fuerit, ex suo arbitrio legat; vel omnem licentiam repansationis habeant; ut lætentur sibi ad requiem diem Dominicum constitutum ||." The Catholic Sunday is not however the day of mere bodily repose and profane amusement. "Let us leave to the Jews," says Rupertus, "the ancient joy of their Sabbath, which is to them the creation of the visible world, with the hope of whose transitory fruits they are alone delighted, while for his earthly gifts seeming to serve God ¶."

Recent authors** have shown in works, which the ignorance of modern times in matters of religion rendered necessary, that the Catholic Church requires the whole of the Sunday to be

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* Revelat. S. Birgittæ, lib. iv. 33.
† Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 27.
‡ Id. i. 170.
§ Regula Tarnatensis, c. 6. ap. Luc. Holstein. Codex Reg.
|| Regula Magistri, c. lxxv. ap. id.
¶ De Divinis Officiis, lib. vii. c. 19.
** Le Courtier, p. 253. Le Dimanche.

sanctified; not the morning only, as some northern Catholics would practically prescribe, nor the afternoon only, according to the usage, after all their boasting, of many heretics, but the entire day. With the latter no joyful multitude in festive apparel fills every road at the first streaks of morning, hastening to the church, and praying as they walk, as in Catholic countries, where we see practised what the capitulary of Charlemagne ordains, saying, "It is to church that the faithful should repair on Sundays and festivals, and not remain at home hearing mass, which priests through an abuse may celebrate for them *." He who rises late loses mass, say the Spaniards. Where the attractions of the Catholic Church have been withdrawn, a poet to find devotion sanctifying the first hours of the Sunday has to consort with the birds—

"Sweet morning !—on my wakeful ear
No eager voices rush ; all is still here !
Save when some early songster singing near
Comes to delight me, warbling strong and clear.
It seems to say, All labour is at rest,
Then calm the tumult of thine anxious breast,
One day with us put off all thought—all care—
And sing to Heaven, All cheerful as we are.—
Six days the little songsters all in vain
Their various notes and fluttering pinions strain ;
You are all labour, strife, and care, and pain.
The Sunday morning whispers holy things—
Angels and spirits seem with cool light wings
To be amidst the verdure †." ———

In fine, within the Church itself, the joyful spirit of the Catholic religion, with regard to the resurrection of our Lord, could be traced in the very attitude of the multitude ; for "on Sundays, from evening to evening, the people were taught not to bend a knee, 'sed stantes incurvati orent ;' while on no occasion were they to pray on one knee, like the Jews, who knelt so when they mocked our Lord ‡."

And now, having cast a rapid glance at the signal consisting in the popular observance of religious days in general, I cannot refuse to read other solemn indications, no less significative, which are furnished by the multitude along this road of popular devotion ; for the piety of the people points to the Catholic Church in reverencing the holy angels, in devoutly honouring the blessed Virgin, and finally in its general and truly Catholic worship of Almighty God.

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* Ap. Nisard, vie de Charlemagne.

† Blakey, Christian Hermits.

‡ Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 173.

"Pray for me, my child," says a French poet, "that I may be esteemed worthy to behold an angel." With the people of the Church, if not seen, the presence of these ministering spirits is felt, and taken for granted as a fact unquestionable, each man in the silent hour of inward thought still respecting and watching over himself as having an invisible companion. Along this path, therefore, we hear sung—

"Avete mentes lucidæ,
Nostræ salutis vindices,
Cœlestis ore nuncii,
Regis superni milites ;"

or that fourth hymn of Synesius, "Grant, O King, a social companion, holy messenger of holy strength, friendly, beneficent, guardian of the soul, guardian of life, of prayers and of vows"—

Ἕταρον δίδου ξύνωνον ἄναξ,
Ἅγιον ἁγίας ἄγγελον ἀλκᾶς,
Φίλον, ἐθλοδότον, φύλακα ψυχῆς,
Φύλακα ζωῆς, εὐχὰς φρουρόν:

or that more confident confession—

"Angelus nobis datus est patronus,
Dux vitæ nostræ, medicus salutis,
Tutor, et recti monitor, Magister,
Semper et æque.
Noster est custos, socius, minister,
Præses, Auditor, columenque tantum,
Et decus magnum, volucer Parentis,
Nuncius alti."

Beyond the sphere of Catholicity, excepting as a mere theoretical supposition in the minds of a few learned men, the angels are unknown. The company that is saluted along with the first youth men meet with in Protestant countries, is not, as in Provence, the guardian spirit, but a dog or two ; for as Telemachus is described by Homer, the poor boy there, too, has company—

οὐκ οἶος ἅμα τῷγε δύο κύνες ἀργοὶ ἕποντο [*].

"Nevertheless," as de la Cerda says, "all men, good and bad, nay, according to St. Thomas, even Antichrist, must have a guardian angel, as God wishes all men to be saved ; and angelic ministry forms one of the ordinary means of obtaining eternal life [†]." "The effects of angelic custody," says St. Bonaventura, "are multiplied :

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[*] ii. 11.

[†] De la Cerda, De Excellentia Cœlestium Spirituum, c. 39.

" for in the first place they remove impediments to good and occasions of evil acting, as in Exodus[*] — mittam angelum qui ejiciat Jebusæum. Secondly, they mitigate temptations, as in Daniel[†]—angelus descendit in fornacem. Thirdly, they assist against visible enemies, as in the book of Kings[‡]—Elisæus vidit castra angelorum. Fourthly, they present our prayers and alms to God, as in Tobias[§]—quando orabas cum lacrymis. Fifthly, they show the way, as in the same book[||]—ego sanum ducam et reducam. Sixthly, they teach action, as in Zacharias[¶]—de Angelo qui instruit eum de quatuor fabris. Seventhly, they reveal their presence and other secrets, as in Tobias[**]—Ego sum Raphael. Eighthly, they convert from sin, as symbolically in the Acts—Surge velociter. Ninthly, they excite fervour, as in the book of Kings[††]—Surge, comede, grandis enim tibi restat via. Tenthly, they console, as in Tobias—Forti animo esto in proximo est, ut a Deo cureris. Eleventhly, they reprove for sin, as in the book of Judges the angel says,—Cur contra Deum fecistis? Twelfthly, they keep off contrary powers from hurting, as in Tobias,—Angelus Armodeum ligavit[‡‡]. Of the nine orders of angels recognized in all the popular expressions, there is mention in the holy Scriptures, where, as St. Isidore and Bede remark, in commenting on Ezekiel, they are described under the names of precious stones. Angel is a name not of nature, but of obedience; for it is, when sent as messengers, that these spirits bear it,—so that Antonio de Escobar confounds angels with men of various employments, as if there was really little difference between them. If we refer to the Holy Fathers and scholastic philosophers, we find that the simple and beautiful devotion of the people in this respect, is but a strict adherence to the great Catholic tradition. St. Augustin, speaking of the angels, says, " They walk with us in all our ways; they enter and go out with us, attentively considering how piously, how honestly, we converse in the midst of an evil nation. They hear us labouring; they protect us resting; they encourage us contending; they crown us conquering[§§]." Richard of St. Victor exclaims, " How do they desire our salvation, and to have the guardianship of us! Who can estimate with what charity and care they watch over those committed to them! How they excite the torpid, and kindle still more the fervent! how they excuse evils, and represent the good to the Divine sight! how they obtain grace! how they love those serving God with pure intention, and rejoice with them[||||]!" " Let us be grateful to the angels," says

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[*] xxxiii.
[†] iii.
[‡] IV. Reg.
[§] xii.
[||] v.
[¶] ii.
[**] xii.
[††] iii. 19.
[‡‡] S. Bonav. Compend. Theolog. Veritatis, lib. ii. c. 18.
[§§] Solil. c. 27.
[||||] Ric. S. Vict. in Cantica, 5.

St. Thomas of Villanova, "those gracious companions of our pilgrimage, who do not disdain to accompany us on our journey; for they undertake to be our patrons and masters, our handmaids and friends, our comrades and guides, ever with us to bear assistance in every manner possible *." Many ancient churches were placed under the invocation of the guardian angels †. Of the angel Uriel there is mention in the mass of the Æthiopians; and St. Ambrose names him along with Gabriel and Raphael. And now another form presents itself, under which the popular devotion points to the Catholic Church. The crowd makes a solemn halt—the image of Mary is before us; and then, as Dante describes what he found in the region where illusions end,—

"All sang one song; Blessed be thou among
The daughters of Adam! and thy loveliness
Blessed for ever ‡!"

Some ancient prose, perhaps, is added to their song, which thus proceeds—

"Omnis homo, sine mora,
Laude plena solvens ora,
Istam colas, ipsam ora;
Omne die, omni hora,
Sit mens supplex, vox sonora;
Sic supplica, sic implora,
Hujus patrocinia.
In spes certa miserorum,
Vere mater orphanorum,
In levamen oppressorum,
Medicamen infirmorum,
Omnibus es omnia.
Ad te, pia, suspiramus;
Si non ducis, deviamus;
Ergo doce quid agamus;
Post hunc finem ut vivamus
Cum sanctis perenniter."

Thus do the people salute the Virgin Mother of our Lord; for her employing ever "their store of tenderest names; the very sweetest words that fancy frames, when thankfulness of heart is strong and deep." For all have graces to acknowledge. The poor maiden who owed her escape from drowning in the glassy stream ostensibly to a pendant bough, at the moment when she fell, assured that the Mother of Jesus had interceded for her, goes every month on pilgrimage to testify her gratitude in the

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* S. Thom. à Vill. De Div. Mich. Serm. ii.

† De la Cerda, c. 2.

‡ Purg. 29.

chapel of Betharram, and in a curious hymn, in the popular idiom of Bearn, thus addresses her—

"Sans votre aide j'étois perdue,
Dit-elle alors, Reine du Ciel :
Ma chute nul ne l'avait vue,
Mais vous, qui m'avez entendue,
Etes venue à mon appel.
Et moi, dans une ardeur nouvelle,
En souvenir de ce bonheur,
Tous les mois, à cette chapelle,
Où votre saint amour m' appelle,
Je vous ferai don de mon cœur [*]."

But we are not driven for examples to the lonely wanderers through the willows that grow askant the brook. Whole cities, by official acts, testify the same impression. Poitiers thus ascribed its deliverance from an invading enemy to our Lady's intercession, and commemorated the event, celebrated in history, by a solemn anniversary. In that city her statue holds a bunch of keys in her hand, in memory of the keys which the traitor, by heavenly interposition, as it was believed, could not find under the mayor's pillow when he had agreed to betray the gates to the enemy [†]. But I should never finish, had I to enumerate all the Catholic cities in which the people point to the blessed Virgin as their patroness. And are they to blush, think you, reader, when they hear their devotion ridiculed by the stragglers from a Protestant city, who have never heard of any other patroness but that which is provided for a ball? Fy, fy! unknit that threatening unkind brow, and dart not scornful glances from those eyes, to wound the faithful people of God who invoke his blessed Mother. Such allusions, however here misplaced, shall not disturb us now ; for here no sophists mingle with the loving multitude. Let us only hear the blessed Hildephonso, Archbishop of Toledo, bearing witness to the universality of this devotion ; for, after citing the words, "Lo, all generations shall call me blessed," he adds, "Therefore, look at the earth at every part that the sun illuminates, and see how there is now almost no nation, no race, which does not believe in Christ, and how, wherever Christ is worshipped and adored, Mary, the venerable Mother of God, is proclaimed happy and most blessed ; how, throughout the whole world, in every region and in every language, there is a voice proclaiming the privileges of the blessed Virgin Mary, to whom there are as many witnesses as there are men [‡]." What hand, amidst this pious crowd, does not bear the

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[*] Chronique de Bétharram.

[†] De Fleuri Hist. de S. Radégonde, 303.

[‡] B. Hildephonsi Tolet. De Assumptione B. M.

chaplet, and on how many brown manly breasts peeps out the scapular? Father Cornelius de Jonghe, of the Dominican convent of Antwerp, promoted the devotion of the rosary with such success, that in the one town of Cortracena upwards of twelve thousand persons were inscribed in its confraternity. After his preaching, even the boys and children were so smitten with the love of this holy exercise of saluting Mary, and meditating on the Christian mysteries with the beads, that they persuaded their parents to belong to it. He says, that after some time, when he had perambulated the whole town, going from house to house, he could only discover one person who had neglected to be inscribed. "Every man and boy in the town," saith he, "belongs to it. Some old men, of a hundred years, lament that they have not young feet, in order to walk to hear the mass of the Rosary, to which the others hasten with such alacrity *." Strangers are often struck on seeing the devotion of Catholics among the people, meditating on the beads. They are struck with their fervour. Hear a modern traveller :—"At Evora, on Sunday morning, conversing with a girl in the kitchen of the inn, who showed me her books, one of which, given to her, she said, by a great constitutionalist, Volney's Ruins, I proceeded to tell her, was written by an infidel, whose sole aim was to bring all religion into contempt, she made no reply, but going into another room, returned with her apron full of dry sticks, all which she piled upon the fire, and produced a blaze. She then took the book from my hand and placed it upon the flaming pile ; then sitting down, took her rosary out of her pocket, and told her beads till the volume was consumed." In their houses, in churches, even on the way side, we see such persons transported by the chaplet to Nazareth, or the Garden of Olives, or to the Holy Sepulchre, most frequently, perhaps, through the pressure of human misery, which predominates on earth, considering the passion of Christ, "ad quiescendum in eâ," as Ludolph the Carthusian says, or, through tenderness, "ad compatiendum in eâ," or, through fervour of piety, "ad imitandum." We see them saying the rosary, "kneeling in sign of humility, standing in sign of a mind upraised, lying prostrate in sign of the fear of judgment, reclining in sign of the remembrance of death, sitting in sign of tranquillity and peace, walking in sign of progress in virtue, or working in sign of anxiety for eternal glory †."

Let us pause here awhile to consider this devotion of the beads, by the meditations belonging to them intellectual ; by the prayers devotional ; by the influence of the consecrated grains mysterious, verifying the remark of the philosopher, that our

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[*] Belgium Dominicanum, 249.

[†] Leonard. Fossæi Grani—Aquensis de Rosario Discurs. lib. i. 6.

thoughts correspond to the irrational or incommensurable lines in geometry*, for which we cannot give another reason†. When faith and charity and hope are on the decline, the chaplet is laid up in the cabinets of rich men, if of costly materials, or if any historical interest belong to it; but the popular attachment to it points to manners which know of no such distinctions. "Formerly," as Alanus de Rupe says, "if any one had to begin a new state of life, or assume any high office, or offer himself to any trade, and did not appear with a rosary of beads, he would have endangered his reputation as a good man;" and he adds, that "the beads in his time were regarded as the distinguishing sign of a Catholic‡." The rosary, so called from the sweetness which it yields to those who use it, "for what, say they, can be sweeter to the mind than each of its parts? What sweeter than to say Pater noster? What sweeter than, Qui es in cœlis? What sweeter than, Sanctificetur nomen tuum?—or than, Fiat voluntas tua?—or, the rest?"—The rosary, called sometimes the Golden Psalter, or the Psalter of the blessed Virgin, is a popular devotion which directs us to the first ages of Christianity; for, as in the early Church it was the custom for the more perfect Christians to chant the Psalter of David in three divisions of fifty each, so the more simple, who could not read, adopted the Angelic salutation, and repeated it the same number of times, thinking that all the mysteries of the Psalms were contained in it; as this sacred formula pronounced Him whom they foretold to be already come. This was, therefore, called the Psalter of the blessed Virgin; and that it was used by the ancient fathers of the desert is the general opinion of the learned authors who have treated on it, as Clemens à Lossau and Alanus. From the anachorites it was perpetuated and transmitted to the Benedictine monks. Bede, who died in 733, attests that in his time this sacred mode of praying prevailed through all England and France. The beads used to be suspended with veneration in churches and public places, for the accommodation of all who wished to use them. We read of St. Eloy, that, "for a certain devout lady he made a chair adorned with one hundred and fifty gold and silver nails, that by the signs of the nails she might repeat the Psalter of blessed Mary §." St. Dominick, therefore, in the thirteenth century, did but revive and propagate a mode of devotion which dates from the earliest times of the Church. Thomassinus, speaking of the substitution of a certain number of Pater Nosters for the canonical office by the lay

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* Eucl. x.

† Plato De Repub. vii.

‡ Ap. Leonard. Fossæi Grani—Aquensis de Rosario Discurs. lib. i. 5.

§ Id. lib. i.

brethren of the order of Cluny, in the year 1200, observes, that "if recited with fervour, this kind of canonical office would be very excellent; it would," he says, "be that mental or that vocal and perpetual prayer required by Scripture, and similar to that which Cassien described *." Mental prayer, indeed, as Leonardus observes, can avail without the voice, while vocal is not meritorious without a devout mind; yet, both together combined, as is required in the rosary, constitutes the most available exercise, we are told, on account of the double penality or exercise of body and mind which is involved in it †. In Spain, as Albertus Castella relates, a great and most learned doctor, from observing the effects of the rosary upon a certain devout lady, who from her girlhood had assiduously used it, was induced to devote all his efforts to propagate this devotion. After a long conversation with her on the subject, he declared that he was thenceforth her disciple, and proceeded to preach everywhere upon the fruits of the rosary; and, moved by his persuasions, the people everywhere began to practise it ‡. In fact, as experience proves, the effects are always the same. Alanus de Rupe says, therefore, "As the world was renewed and heaven opened by Ave, Maria, so in these latter times, by the same words has the world been again recalled to an observance of the holy laws of God, and the human race restored to its former loveliness." As Dominicus Gravina says, "Now, too, thanks to the religious orders," and he might have added, to the use and confraternity of the rosary, "we have, as in the primitive Church, vigils, prayers, tears, striking of the breast, sighs from the depth of the soul, stations by night and peregrinations of mind to God §." "Cœlum ridet," says St. Bernard, "angelus gaudet, mundus exultat, cum dicimus Ave, Maria." Leonardus proceeds to count the effects of the rosary, and he describes them, saying, "The fruits of the rosary are certain hidden and special graces obtained by the suffrage of the blessed Virgin, of which the world is not worthy, and which no one knows unless he who actually receives and tastes them. St. Bernardine of Sienna used often to say, that he owed all that he received from on high to his devout contemplation of the joys of the blessed Virgin, whose crown or chaplet he recited daily. A certain protection and joy in death form another consequence of the habit of contemplating the joyful mysteries of the rosary, while in life. Another fruit is an aversion to sin and a conversion to God; for, by the intense meditation of the bitter passion of Christ, a man is disposed to contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Another fruit of the rosary is the restoration of peace between God and man; for by

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* Thomass. de l'Office divin., &c. p. i. c. 21.

† De Rosario, lib. i. 6. ‡ Id. lib. i. 9. § Ap. id. i. 4.

the passion and death of Christ, on which it keeps the mind intently bent, peace and reconciliation are made between God and the human race. Another fruit is the alleviation and sweetening of all labours, tribulations, and adversities: for as St. Antoninus observes *, the human mind, shaken by misfortunes, is often terrified, and being terrified, as if deprived of all the vigour of virtue, languishes in sadness; and to the mind thus languishing divine things have no taste; but the rosary, by recalling the mysteries of our redemption, enables it to rise aloft; for, as St. Gregory says, there can be nothing so hard, that the memory of Christ's passion will not render bearable. Another fruit of the rosary is the acquisition of the grace of God; for, as Albertus Magnus says, in his book de Missa, the simple meditation of the passion of Christ is of more avail and acceptable to God, than if a man were to fast on bread and water every Friday of the year. Another fruit of the rosary is the restoration of negligences and omissions, impressing the mind with a sense of what St. Bernard says, that our own merits are insufficient, and that we must take for ourselves from the wounds of our Lord; or, as St. Chrysostom says,—"tota salus hominum in morte Christi posita est †." "The confraternities of the rosary," he continues, "have many special privileges, of which the chief, perhaps, is a certain patient and cheerful endurance of present misery,—Præsentis miseriæ patiens et jucunda tolerantia ‡." Another consequence of the institution is an augmentation of divine worship, and a special veneration of the saints; for who could number all the chapels, images, paintings, and devout prayers which are owing to it? or all the pious thoughts, affections, and desires, the sighs and genuflexions and strikings of the breast, which could be traced to it? In a word, the popular practice of the rosary implying thus the essential qualities of true prayer, and the diffusion of the Christian spirit through the most secret recesses of the mind and heart, can direct those who observe the effects to recognize the Divine Wisdom which governs the Catholic Church, which perpetuates this exercise by her grace, and sanctions it by her authority.

It would be a task interminable to review the proofs furnished by the people of the greatness of their love for the Mother of the world's Redeemer; I shall only add here, that in respect to that love, the greatest and noblest and highest of the human race have ever sought to identify themselves with the people, and with their poet, praying that "from heaven's Queen, whom fervent they adored, all gracious aid might befriend them §!" On this path we meet, therefore, mixed with the plebeian crowd, kings,

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* 4 p. tit. 3, c. 7, § 4.

† Id. lib. i. 8.

‡ Id. lib. i. 9.

§ Par. 31.

statesmen, philosophers, and poets; but I will only turn to look back on him who was once called the divine young man, that charming figure of the painter Raphael, who all his life entertained for Mary the child-like love of a true son; from his youth being always delighted to multiply her pictures for the edification of the devout multitude, desiring that his body should be buried near her altar, in the church of St. Mary of the Rotunda, and ordering that her image, which he entrusted to the execution of Lorenzetto, should be placed over his grave.

I repeat it. No cavils or discussion shall disturb the harmony of this hour. Methinks, where we stand, the people have caught the sound of the distant bell, which announces the Angelus, and Ave, Maria, gratia plena sung. All are praying—

"How calm! how still!
The evening darkness gathers round,
By virtue's holiest powers attended."

The Catholic Church seems to stand immediately before us as we gaze thus and meditate. There only can we participate in the devotion of the Magi, when, "intrantes domum, invenerunt Puerum cum Maria matre ejus." With the adversaries of the Catholic Church we may find Him who can nowhere be excluded—God; Him whose name can be banished from no human language that has once known it—Christ: but not Him who was on earth—the child Jesus; not the Messiah clothed in his humanity. We may find a being called the Saviour, pale as an ideal image with some, stern as an implacable judge with others,—a Lord indeed; but, with Calvin, with Knox, with Luther:—only in the Catholic Church do we find the boy with Mary his mother. Yes, and with our mother, for all these youths and maidens, these fathers and devout matrons, look up to her as to their mother; and only as one of them does St. Gertrude exclaim, in addressing Christ, "To crown all thy benefits, thou didst grant to me to have thy sweetest mother, the most blessed Virgin Mary, for my mother*." Now, that the mother of God is really also our mother, is shown by theologians; one of whom, in a work entitled, "The Mother of God the Mother of Men," proves that this is not a pious interpretation, but a theological truth. "In the order of nature," he says, "we have a common mother—Eve, from whom we receive death; and in the order of grace, we have a common mother—Mary, who is the mother of life. On the cross our Lord said, Mulier, ecce filius tuus—and in John, the disciple whom Jesus loved—we understand all true disciples whom our Lord calls his

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* Insin. div. piet. seu vit. et revelat. S. Gertrudis Abb. lib. ii. c. 23. iii. c. 1.

brethren. Why to St. John, who had probably his own mother present at the time, does he give another mother? And, mark, he calls her, Mulier, when fulfilling the prediction, delivered four thousand years before, in the terrestrial paradise, Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius. 'No one of you is ignorant,' says St. Augustin to the Catechumens, 'that here the serpent is the devil, and that the woman is the Virgin Mary, who brought forth our Head.' Between Eve and the serpent there was a conformity of thoughts and affections, and a league of friendship; but the true enmity between the woman and demon is that of Mary, who had with Eve a conformity, not of disposition but of nature, being more humble than Eve was proud. Mary was the woman between whom and the serpent reigned an absolute division of interests, an eternal enmity, caused by the Holy Spirit with whom she was filled, verifying the words, Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem. The sin of Eve had procured for the serpent a posterity and race, children of Eve, which belonged to him as their father. The firmness, humility, and holiness of Mary rendered her the mother of Jesus Christ, and, in him, of all those whom his grace and blood had regenerated, who have Christ for their father. Such are those who compose his family, the family of the woman, of Mary his mother, who have the spirit of humility, purity, sincerity, and love. For it was Mary who bruised the serpent's head, fulfilling the words, Ipsa conteret caput tuum. So, in his commentary on the words, Mulier, ecce filius tuus, Origin adds this passage, 'John is your son, for he is another Jesus, whose mother you are; for whoever is perfect lives no more in himself, but it is Christ who lives in him:' and St. Paul, showing that all members of the true Church are of his body, confirms this interpretation. After the fall, after that Eve had become the mother of death, Adam called the woman Eve, which great name signifies living, and the mother of all living; because, as St. Epiphanius says, Adam had in view the second Eve, that is, Mary. 'The blessed mother of God, Mary,' saith he, 'is signified by Eve, which name she received by an enigma, that she should be called the mother of all living *.'" "Behold, then," exclaims blessed Hildephonso, "thou art blessed amongst women; all generations call thee blessed, all celestial virtues know thee to be blessed, all nations celebrate thee as blessed.—Prædicem te, donec prædicanda es; diligam te, donec diligenda es; laudem te, donec laudabilis es; serviam tibi, donec serviendum est gloriæ tuæ †."

Thus, then, the popular devotion to Mary points to the great

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* Hæres. 78.

† Beat. Hildephonsis De Virginitate S. Mariæ, cap. 1.

fundamental principles of the whole scheme of Divine Providence in redeeming man, and consequently, in a general manner, to the Church, which realizes that divine economy on earth; but this devotion points also, in a special manner, to the Catholic Church, as being conformable to her express decisions, and to the teaching of her apostles and doctors in every age. The Church tells us, that Mary participated in our resurrection to a life of grace, as did Eve to our life of sin—that the body and blood of Christ, offered for us upon the cross, belonged in a particular manner to Mary, as St. Augustin remarks, ".Caro Christi, caro Mariæ;" and Bede, saying, "Carnem non aliunde sed materna traxit ex carne." Moreover, it is her doctrine that Mary, having made a voluntary offering of her son to be the victim on the cross, although the merit of the sacrifice arises from the substantial union of the Word to the human flesh of Christ, the humanity in which the sacrifice is offered, in which consists its exterior accomplishment, is the fruit of Mary, and offered by her voluntarily, which considerations abundantly justify the popular devotion. But as this conformity between the doctrine of the Church and the devotion of the people will hardly be denied, let us leave the more beaten theological road, and take one which will present the freshness of a sweet wild path that has been long untrodden, though once beautiful and well known, lovely with the flowers of saintly eloquence in very ancient times; where we shall find the same popular belief and sentiments only expressed in words that may be least familiar to the wanderer of our age, who walks through the deserted fields of the mediæval sacred erudition. The blessed Hildephonso, archbishop of Toledo, meets us then at this high pass, and speaks as follows: "O my lady and my sovereign mistress, mother of my Lord, handmaid of thy Son, mother of the world's Creator! I pray and beseech thee that I may have the spirit of thy Son, that I may have the spirit of my Redeemer, that I may think of thee true and worthy things, speak of thee true and worthy things, and utter whatever true and worthy things can be uttered concerning thee. For thou art elected by God, assumed by God, near to God, adhering to God, conjoined to God; visited by an angel, saluted by an angel, blessed by an angel, and pronounced blessed by an angel *." Then, turning to the only disparagers of the blessed Virgin that he could find to contend with, and who alone can still disparage her without self-contradiction, so gross as to be unworthy of refutation, he continues thus: "What sayest thou, O Jew? True, our Virgin is by race thine, by family thine, by nation thine; but by faith she is ours, by belief she is ours, by consent she is ours, by reverence she is ours, by praise

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* De Virginitate S. Mariæ, cap. 1.

she is ours, by glorification she is ours, by love she is ours, by preaching she is ours, by vindication she is ours. For that which the Holy Ghost predicted of her by the prophets, intimated by oracles, signified by figures, promised by predecessors, accomplished by subsequents, thou denying, thou not believing, but rejecting, scorning, blaspheming, I have known, I have believed, I have tasted, I honour, I glorify, I embrace, I love, I preach, I proclaim *. Yes, I desire to become the servant of the mother of my God; and why I should desire this, they know who love God, they see who are faithful to God, they know who are not unknown to God. But not so ye, O wise of this world, who by this wisdom are made fools, and who reject this doctrine, who refuse to believe that she alone should have him for Son, whom every creature has for its Lord. But I, as the servant of her Son, desire to have the testimony of submission to his mother. For thus what serves the handmaid is referred to the Lord, what is shown to the mother redounds to the Son, what is paid to the queen passes to the honour of the king. So, congratulating with angels, rejoicing with angels' voices, exulting with angels' hymns, I rejoice with the mother of my Lord, I exult with the handmaid of her Son, I am delighted with her who is made the mother of her Creator. Because I have believed with her that Christ, her son, is my salvation, confiding in the death of the Son of God and in the cross of my Redeemer, having true hope that, by the blood of her Son, my sins are covered and my iniquities forgiven, that, cleansed by the goodness of God, purified by the mercy of God, justified by the pious Judge, sanctified by the copious Redeemer, I may be associated with blessed angels and celestial choirs, to sing for ever the praises of my God, from whom is pardon, and salvation, and life, and exultation for everlasting ages †." After comparing the concordance of the Catholic doctrine with the inconsistencies and contradictions of those who now seem to have proved sufficiently that enmity with "the woman," as if from a paternal descent, is their fatal inheritance, we may repeat the words which issued to Jovinian from the chair of old Toledo, and say, "Si hæc concordantia nescis, a concordia veritatis ipse privatus es. Si hæc discordantia causaris, semper discors justitiæ inveneris ‡." "I entreat you then, O Jew," he continues, "suffer this to be. Let the excellence of such a Virgin of your race be grateful to you. Let it be delightful to you to have found in your nation a Virgin of such glory. Lo, by means of this Virgin, the whole earth is filled with the glory of God! All know, from the least to the greatest, by this Virgin the living God; all by this Virgin behold the sal-

* Id. 3. † cap. xii. ‡ Id.

vation of God; all the ends of the earth by this Virgin are turned to the Lord; all the countries of the nations adore in the sight of her Son. His is the kingdom, and He will reign over the nations for ever. All sing to the Lord, her Son, a new song of his redemption; for, being born of this Virgin, He hath done great things. The Lord has made known by this Virgin his salvation, and before our sight has revealed his justice. By this Virgin they have found God who could not find Him by the observance of the law. By this Virgin God has come; and having gathered together the nations and the languages, we have seen his glory as the glory of the only-begotten of the Father. All nations are assembled together in the name of this Lord, in the midst of Jerusalem, which is the vision of peace, that is, the universal Church, and they will walk no more after the depravity of their hearts. We have flowed to Him from all people, we ascend to this Lord, to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, which is the Church of the living God; whilst thou art still aloof, through true pride and fallacious obedience. But yet there is time. Come then with me to this Virgin, lest without her thou shouldest be hastening to perdition,—Unde jam veni mecum ad hanc Virginem, ne sine hac properes ad gehennam. Confess the Son to be God, and the Son of man Son of the Virgin mother, that He may confess thee before the Father of his divinity. Fear his majesty amongst men, lest his humanity should precipitate thee into Tartarus before his angels. Love Him while He is patient, lest He should hate thee when he is thy judge *." We have heard the people supplicating and seeking the intercession of the blessed Virgin. Their pastors, each of whose words were weighed and measured with the most exact precision, preceded them on this path. "May Almighty God assist us," cries St. Hildephonso, "by the glorious intercession of his mother, that by her supplications we may live with Him, who, for our sakes, deigned to suffer death, that we with Him might have life everlasting †!" Let us hear Savonarola, before whom the philosophers of Florence stood silent with the poor, "O blessed Mary, O happy mother, O glorious mother, immaculate mother of thy Maker, of thy Creator, mother of thy Father, yea, of the Father of all creatures! Embrace thy Lord, kiss thy God, satiate thyself with his sweet aspect, take Him to thy bosom, feed Him who nourishes the angels, give food to Him who feeds the whole world, satiate Him who satiates all blessed souls, bind Him whom the whole orb cannot contain, govern Him who governs all things, lull Him to rest who never sleeps,

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* De Virginit. S. Mariæ.

† In Nativitate B. Mariæ.

guard Him who makes the heavens tremble. Tell me, Mary, I beseech thee, where is thy heart? What does thy tongue utter? Certainly thou canst not tell it to me; not because thou knowest it not, but because I am not capable of receiving it. O inestimable joy! O incomprehensible jubilation! O sweetest Mary! O thou the most glorious of the blest! I beseech thee, by the ineffable mercy of thy only Son, that thou wouldest turn the eyes of thy clemency upon me, most wretched, upon this dust and ashes; and recollect, O Virgin Mary, that it is for me, and for my sins and miseries, thou art a Virgin and a mother, for me the mother of God, for me that God in thee was made man, that for me in thee the Word took flesh. Pray then to thy Son, who for me and thee became mortal, became my brother, and thy Son and spouse, that he may pardon my sins and ignorance, my ingratitude and negligence, and remember not the faults of my youth in past time, and that he may remit all my offences to this hour *."

How different must be the popular mind, formed by the Catholic tradition, conveyed in such instructions from the state of all in regard to real belief who are without the Church, to whom each syllable of the preceding passages will sound as offensive as to the Jews! But as St. Hildephonso says to one resembling them, "When the Spirit of God has predicted this by the prophets, confirmed it by doctors, defended it by the authors of truth, consolidated it by the eternity of ages, why do you attempt to raise up a new error † ?"

But, hark! it is the devout multitude singing as they walk; for with them one always hears snatches of old chants that have charmed them generation after generation—

"O quam sancta!
Quam serena!
Quam benigna!
Quam amœna
Esse virgo creditur!
Per quam servitus finitur,
Porta cœli aperitur,
Et libertas redditur.
O castitatis lilium,
Tuum precare Filium,
Qui salus est humilium,
Ne nos pro nostro vitio,
In flebili judicio,
Subjiciat supplicio,
Sed nos tua sancta prece,
Mundans a peccati fæce,

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* Savonarolæ Sermo in Nat. Dom.
† De Virg. S. Mariæ.

Collocet in lucis domo,
Amen dicat omnis homo *."

Since the popular devotion to the blessed Virgin arises thus immediately out of the profoundest mystery of the Christian religion, which the proud reason of man through many motives is most inclined to reject, let us continue to remain some time longer with the pious crowd, listening to the instructions it receives, and following the direction which it furnishes to those who perhaps without it might be wandering astray through the forest of this life, trusting to its wild and fatal echoes.

"Fear not, dear reader," says the monk of Mount Serrat, who has recorded, in his history of that abbey, the effects of the intercession of our Lady, "fear not, in regard to your devotion to blessed Mary, while it is as full of wisdom as of gratitude; for, in short, thanks be to God, we are not, nor do we wish to be Collydidiens or Antidiomarianists, nor do we suffer manners disproportionate with the grandeur of religion, indulging in exterior puerilities rather than what is interior and solid †." Let us mark the concordance of the great mystic lights of the Catholic Church with the common sentiment of the simple multitude, in regard to the invocation of the blessed Virgin. It was the custom of St. Gertrude, says the book of Insinuations, "to refer to the beloved of her soul whatever she heard read or sung in praise of the blessed Virgin or of the saints. Once, on the festival of the Annunciation, hearing a preacher extol the blessed Virgin without mentioning the saving work of the Incarnation of our Lord, she felt troubled; and returning from the sermon, as she passed before the altar of the generous Virgin, she felt in saluting it as if she was not moved with sweet affection towards that mother of all grace, but rather as if she was wholly absorbed in regarding the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus; and she began to fear lest she should incur the anger of that potent Queen; but these fears her benign consoler dissipated, saying, Fear not—for the more thou thinkest of me in saluting my beloved mother, the more dear thou art to her, in the same manner as I shall love thee the more for loving her even when thou shouldest omit to salute me ‡." Similarly, in the revelations of St. Bridget, the people are admonished to regard the love of the son as essential to that of the mother. The blessed Virgin, addressing her, speaks thus,—"I am the Queen of Heaven.

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* Prose of the Cluniac Missal.

† Dom Louis Montegut, Hist. de Notre Dame du Mont Serrat—Réflections sur les Indulgences, 274.

‡ Insin. Div. Pietatis seu vit. et revelationes S. Gertrudis abb. lib. iii. c. 20.

Are you anxious to know how you ought to praise me? Know then that the praise of my Son is my praise, and that he who dishonours him dishonours me; because I love him and he loves me so fervently, that we are as if we had both but one heart. Therefore praise me by saying, Blessed be thou, O God, Creator of all, who didst descend into the womb of the Virgin Mary. Blessed be thou, O God, who didst deign to take our flesh from her. Blessed be thou, O God, who didst gladden thy Virgin Mother after thy ascension, and visit her with consolations.—Miserere mei propter preces ejus *."

St. Hildephonso accordingly speaks as follows,—"As often as anything for the love of our Creator is delivered in praise of the creature, to his glory without doubt it passes, who is the author of creatures; that from his creature, its Maker may be understood and praised: and therefore David said,—Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus. Therefore, dearly beloved, evince diligence on all the festivities of the saints, and especially on this solemnity of the mother of God, that by understanding well and living rightly you may worthily assist in his praises, and wisely sing Psalmody to God; since whatever honour is shown to the mother is offered to him whose almighty power is beheld in the mystery we celebrate †."

"I could find," says Marina de Escobar, "nothing more to say than what the Church repeats of the blessed Virgin,—Quia ex te ortus est Sol justitiæ, Christus Deus noster; and in thinking of her I seemed for long intervals with great consolation to have before the eyes of my soul that divine sun, darkening all things else,—as when any one having looked at the materia lsun with fixed eyes, has the rays always long afterwards mingling with his sight ‡."

But let us mark now the inseparable connexion between the popular devotion to the blessed Virgin and an advance on the way of moral and spiritual perfection, which indeed follows of necessity from the principle we have just observed as constituting its essential concomitant.

In the litany of Betharram, sung by the pilgrims, the people recognize this necessity; for hear their prayer,—

"O mater, nivei flos intemerate pudoris !
O utinam mea mens spiret odore tuo !"

"The invocation of Mary," says an Italian monk, "is a sign and cause of spiritual life, as much as breathing denotes and maintains the natural life;" and he cites these words of St. Germain,—"Sicut respiratio non solum est signum vitæ, sed etiam

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* Revelationum S. Birgittæ lib. i. c. 7.
† Sermo de part. et purif. B. Mariæ.
‡ Vit. ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. i. cap. 8.

causa; ita Mariæ nomen, quod in servorum Dei ore versatur, simul argumentum est quod vivant, et simul etiam hanc vitam efficit et conservat*." So Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, says, "All Christians navigating over the floods of this world, ought to attend to the star of the sea, that is—to Mary, who is nearest to God, and direct their life by her example; and then they will not be beaten by the wind of vain glory, nor dashed against the rocks of adversity, nor absorbed by the whirlpool of pleasures; but prosperously will come to the port of eternal rest †."

But to estimate the tenor of these instructions given to direct the popular devotion to Mary, let us be content with hearing the beautiful words of the blessed St. Hildephonso, who speaks as follows to the people, presenting them in language with the glorious spectacle which the angelic painter of Fiesoli displayed in painting with those celestial graces, which when once seen must rest in the memory for ever. We wonder at the glories of old art; but the words you are about to hear, explain them.

"Therefore, O children, whoever ye may be, boys and girls, old men and youths, prepare yourselves by manners for celebrating the festivity of the Virgin. Lead the chorus of spiritual joy; let whatever holy songs you have ever heard or sung be sung now. But as for you other men, since praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner, until you have put off vices, come not to these festivals. She is called the star of the sea. Let then that morning star which knows no setting arise in your hearts while you are yet on earth; for by this star the whole world is illuminated. Approach to the praise of the Virgin, and be enlightened; since it is by her that true light has shone upon the world. She is moreover the handmaiden of the Lord; learn therefore to be humbled, learn to be meek, since this is the only virtue in which she glories in the Lord, that you also may be able to glory in the same humility ‡."

Pulchra ut luna—yea, more beautiful, because with her beauty the whole body of the Church is illuminated, which is enlightened by the Sun of justice to destroy the darkness of the present life, and to lead us all to that light to which the blessed Virgin has attained, which never wanes, never ceases, never decreases. Therefore let us imitate, while we have the power and while there is time, her whom all the saints collaud and love: for they who imitate her will partake with her of eternal beatitude. Let us imitate blessed Mary, the seal of our faith, whom the Holy Spirit had so transfused, as fire affects iron, that nothing

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[*] S. Germ. Orat. de Virg.

[†] Fulberti de Nativ. V. Virg. Sermo.

[‡] Serm. de Assumpt. B. Mariæ.

remained in her but the fire of the love of God. She is the enclosed garden of delights, the sealed fountain, the well of living water, the reparation of life, the gate of heaven, the ornament and the glory of women, who as the cedar of Lebanon is multiplied and extended upon earth, daily spreading wider and wider its branches, as the palm is exalted, and as the olive is made to fructify, in the house of God for ever. O if it were permitted you to know what are the joys of that life on which she this day entered, what the beauty of that luxuriant Paradise, what that society of angels, what the joy of that innumerable company of holy souls, what the ineffable delight of those secrets which this day was fully disclosed to her! Contemplate then the mother of our Lord flourishing as the mother of love and fear, as the mother of the knowledge of God and of hope—that prudent Virgin—that most lovely Virgin, bright in intelligence, eminent in faith, devout in charity, adorned with all obedience, whose soul was transfixed by a sword in the passion of Christ—her who was predicted by the prophets, and by the philosophers even foreshown—her who nourished Him who nourishes all celestial and terrestrial things, who governed Him by whose nod the whole universe is ruled, who mourned over Him suspended on the cross, who holds all things suspended and depending on his will. Lo, on this day, this holiest of women is exalted with Him whom she bore, to remain with Him without end glorious in the heavens. Let us then celebrate with exultation the solemnity of this day, in which angels and archangels rejoice, and all the glorious city, of the heavenly Jerusalem. Nothing more happy than the words which she now sings, reigning with her son in glory. "Tenuisti," she says, "manum dexteram meam, et in voluntate tua deduxisti me, et cum gloria suscepisti me." For what is there in heaven, and what on earth which I desired without Thee? What but that I should behold thee, my Lord, whom I have loved, whom I have worshipped, whom I have desired with my whole heart, and lo! now I behold Thee on the everlasting throne, the God of my heart, and my portion for ever. For these joys in which the saints rejoice with her in glory, let us also, dearly beloved, exult in the hope of the sons of God, imploring their suffrages to enable us to reach the happy land in which they are now secure with her for ever; for then we truly praise the saints when we follow the things which they followed, and hasten to come to the object of that faith which is by love, otherwise we are vain beholders and wicked admirers; for he who says that he remains in Christ ought to walk as He walked. Therefore let us imitate the saints as well as the mother of our Lord, for by their example many things are gained. Let us follow the spouse—and hasten to enter to the eternal marriage-feast, whither the blessed mother of our Lord

invites us, saying, "While on earth my heart and my flesh rejoiced in the living God, whilst I nourished and watched over Him; and so also you, O my sons, do the will of our Father, that you too may be the mothers and the sisters of Christ, as he admonished you. Do his will; that being sons by adoption, the son of the supreme King may know you; and forget not that you have been purchased with a great price. So then, I repeat it, let us imitate the Virgin mother and all the saints whom we praise, for praise is not of such profit to them as is to us the imitation of their virtues; and true praise consists in imitation. Above all, let us attend to practise the humility of Mary, for which she was declared to be for ever blessed.—Quoniam Dominus humilia respexit in cœlo et in terra. And if in heaven He requires humility amongst the angels, what think you, O sons, will He on earth, when along with sin we are but dust and worms? Therefore in humility imitate the mother of our Lord; for whatever you may possess, it is the gift of God, it is the grace of the Redeemer. They are the gifts of Him whose mother was taken this day gloriously into heaven; and therefore now, I beseech you, O citizens of Jerusalem, whether men or women, virgins or widows, boys or girls, come and behold with all purity of heart, contemplate the mother of our Lord in the ethereal seats resplendent with the crown,—come, I say, in mind with faith and devotion, and see her who has been crowned, in the day of her solemnity and joy, with a crown of beauty and of gladness with which she has been crowned by the Lord, King of glory, and the remunerator of all the good. Come, I beseech you, and see how this day is translated to the seats above the ark of the testament of God, golden exteriorly with all virtues, and interiorly constructed with the gold of purest majesty, in which was the law of the testament of God and the manna which came down from heaven; for within Mary was the keeping of the law and the wonderful sacrament of human salvation. Rightly is it placed upon the mercy-seat; for He is our propitiation, God blessed for ever. Therefore, beloved, raise up your hearts on high, whither the ark of the testament is this day gloriously raised by angels. Ascend in mind to those high abodes to which the female sex and the virginly consecrated to the Lord have risen; and whatever you wish to offer to God, transmit it by faith, since in no other way can you please God the Father, unless by having recourse to Him in whom the Father has placed all his pleasure; for in Him and from Him is all our redemption; and if we offer anything in faith, it is by Him in whom God is well pleased. Hear ye, therefore, Him as the divine voice proclaimed; hear Him speaking in the gospel; hear Him in the sacred scriptures, in which from the beginning the will of the Father by the son is shown. And since this is the day when

the ark of the testament of God was introduced with the joy of gladness into that celestial Jerusalem, celebrate it, I beseech you, with hymns and devout canticles, and with the attendance of all the multitude of the people. For if David led with such triumph the ark of the ancient testament, how much more ought we to commemorate this ark with worthy praises? If such glory were conferred on the figure, what think you this day before the blessed Virgin, taken to the heavenly Jerusalem, must be the exultation of the angelic host, and of those hundreds of thousands who, in the sight of the throne, holding their harps, sing the new song with all the harmonious thunder-peal of heaven! Joyful festivity! to welcome the holy Virgin to that blessed choir, as one of the number of the prudent—yea, as the first of all amongst the first who goeth nearest after the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. But she sings with them that new song which no one, unless in that choir, can sing. There meet her that purple flower Tecla with Cecilia, Agnes also, and Perpetua. There, amongst the widows, she beholds Anna the daughter of Phanuel, Sara also our mother, Rebecca and Rachel, with the holy bridemaids. In fine, all of every order this day celebrate the glorious reception of the ark of the New Testament, in which the true God was contained, not in figure but in reality, for the salvation of men, led back as it were with an angelic escort from the captivity of this world, not to the Jerusalem which the army of the Chaldeans burnt and laid waste, but to that true heavenly Jerusalem founded not by man but by God. Therefore I wish you to consider more attentively with what praises we ought to accompany the blessed mother of God proceeding to the palace of the skies, attended with the angelic hosts amidst the triumphant exultation of all the saints, in whose joy we should participate, remembering how He must have loved us to become for our sakes man. Therefore approach and behold the great vision with Moses; see it fulfilled, and admire what the patriarch foresaw in spirit: otherwise, unless in spirit, it cannot be seen; for it is a great vision which no one can worthily behold or announce; for the figure is passed away, and the reality remains. Moses indeed was blessed, who beheld such things afar off; but more blessed is the vision of Mary, the prospect of which had made the prophets tremble as being incomprehensible. And we, too, should fear lest we should lose the fruit of such a mystery; we should approach in mind with confidence, by the intervention of the most sacred Virgin, to the throne of the High Priest, where for us He is the victim, the priest, the advocate, and judge. And being less fit for this, we should beseech Christ by her whose festival we celebrate; we should implore her prayers, that she would intercede for us with Him whom she bore; for though we are not of such merit

as Moses, and the prophets and apostles, yet blessed are they who have not seen, and who have believed. Let us also believe and praise that we may attain to the promises; and since we cannot worthily praise the blessed Virgin, we should love and venerate her to the utmost of our power. Let us adore God the Father; let us worship Him as true worshippers, according to the Saviour's words, in spirit and in truth; for God is a spirit, and they who adore Him must adore Him in spirit. Let us escape then from these trammels of flesh, and putting off the old man be clothed with the new, who is created according to God. Let us travel more and more from the body, that we may come nearer to God, since they who are in the flesh cannot please Him; and you, beloved, are no longer in the flesh, being led by the Spirit of God as the sons of God. Raise your minds to comprehend the sublime regions, in which Christ sits at the right hand of the Father and is glorified. Adore Him then upon his throne, where the four-and-twenty seniors adore Him, casting down their crowns at his feet, and saying, Gratias tibi agimus, Domine, Deus omnipotens, qui es, et qui eras, qui accepisti virtutem et regnasti in secula seculorum. Raise up then your minds, and contemplate that throne where Christ is seated and the blessed Virgin seen; for there her festival is rightly celebrated, where Christ is the spouse and the happiness of everlasting life, the theme for eternity*."

It remains to observe the efficacy of this devotion, in regard to the miraculous graces with which it has been attended in every age, and also its immense results in elevating and crowning, with a superhuman grace and favour, the whole female sex. St. Amedæus, writing as if he lived at the present day, and had witnessed what takes place so often now, uses these remarkable words: "Every one knows the effects of the intercession of the blessed Virgin, and I need not, therefore, speak of what is continually occurring†." Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, is another witness: "It is ineffable," he says, "what grace and glory the Lord has given to his mother; and this we know for certain, that whatever the just demand from Him, by the intercession of his mother they will more speedily obtain it. Sinners also oftener gain mercy thus, and we have many examples of both‡." Therefore St. Thomas of Villanova says, "O man, whatever tribulation you endure, fly to Mary; whether afflicted with sins, or persecutions, or temptations, seek this tower, for a thousand shields hang from it. There is all the armour of the strong;

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* De Assumpt. B. Mariæ.

† Biblioth. Pat. ap. hist. de plusieurs saints des maisons des comtes de Tonnerre et de Clermont.

‡ Sermo Fulberti de Nativit. B. Virg.

there the faith of apostles; there the fortitude of martyrs; there the purity of virgins, the wisdom of doctors, the poverty of anachorets, the devotion of confessors *." "No one," says Trithemius, "excepting those who are taught by experience, understands or believes, or can receive, what benefits God confers daily on the lovers of blessed Mary. But we know for certain, that, by the invocation of St. Mary, many potent, learned, noble, and plebeian men, virgins, women, youths, and old persons, have been delivered from great tribulations, saved from dangers, and wonderfully aided in necessities; that many of both sexes, religious and secular, have been freed from grievous temptations of flesh and spirit; others sunk in poverty unexpectedly provided for; others cured from severe sickness; others assisted miraculously in their studies and discourses. Who could enumerate those who have been healed from pernicious sadness of mind and melancholy by her intercession? How many saved from perils by land and sea? Who could number all who have been converted from a life of sin, delivered from despair, and inflamed with the fire of divine love after a long interval of tepidity and indifference? Or, in fine. who could relate the multitude of histories respecting those who, even in death, have been made secure of heaven by invoking the intercession of blessed Mary." So writes this learned abbot in his book on the confraternity of St. Anne †.

But this popular devotion, like the hand we found upon the road of the family, points also to the Catholic Church, as having been mainly instrumental in rendering effective her doctrine, by means of which women are elevated to the position which they occupy wherever its influence extends. "Crediderat Eva serpenti; credidit Maria Gabriëli; quod illa credendo deliquit, hæc credenda delevit," so writes Tertullian ‡, uncovering, as it were, the first stone in the foundation of the beautiful structure, which yields to woman equality of dignity with man. "The Virgin Mary," says St. Irenæus, "becomes the advocate of the virgin Eve §." "What sayest thou, O Adam?" cries St. Thomas of Villanova, developing the same theme, "Mulier quam dedisti mihi. Lo, He hath given thee this day a woman for a woman, a prudent for a foolish one, a humble for a proud one; a woman who for the wood of death giveth thee that of life bearing everlasting fruit ||." "As sin began from a woman," says St. Bonaventura, "so the Author of our justice sprung from a woman.

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* S. Thom. a Vill. de Assumptione Virg. i.

† Cap. 14. ap. Leonard. Fossæus Grani-Aquensis de Rosario, lib. i. 9.

‡ De Carne Christi.

§ lib. v. c. 19.

|| S. Thom. a Vill. de Nat. Virg. Mar. ii.

A virgin was the occasion of the fall, a virgin became the cause of our restoration and of all good *." Words could hardly express the consequences, even respecting the present life, which resulted to women in the lower as well as in the higher classes from this faith. Dante, addressing the blessed Virgin, therefore cries—

"Ennobler of thy nature, so advanced
In thee, that its great Maker did not scorn
To make Himself his own creation †."

Such is the doctrine, alone in the Catholic Church practically held, which changed the whole mind and conduct of the world, all philosophy and literature, all legislation and manners, in regard to one half of the human race. But let us hear the solemn hymns chanted by the people, proclaiming the fruitful truth which the early fathers announced in such brief comprehensive words—

"Evæ crimen
Nobis limen
  Paradisi clauserat;
Hæc, dum credit,
Et obedit,
  Cœli claustra reserat ‡."

The first lines of the prose, by Peter the venerable abbot of Cluny, equally precise, announced the same popular familiar theme—

"Cœlum gaude, terra plaude,
Nemo mutus sit in laude:
Ad antiquam originem,
Redit homo per Virginem,
Virgo Deum est enixa,
Unde vetus perit rixa;
Perit vetus discordia,
Succedit pax et gloria."

And now raise your eyes, companion, and mark the multitudes that sit so beautiful at Mary's feet, recalling those whom Dante saw placed in Paradise—Ruth, Rachel, Sarah, Judith, Rebecca, and the gleaner-maid, meek ancestress of David §. Who now can mistake the signal pointing to the Church which supplicates the Virgin, since Mary, to all women of charity and love, has become, to use Dante's words, "As the noon-day torch—benign diffusive light ||;" followed often equally, as all our ancient history and even our own age can still attest, in royal palaces and in rustic cottages, by an empress, who, like to Eleonora of Austria,

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* S. Bonav. Amatorium.
† Par. 33.
‡ Hymn S. Casimio.
§ xxxii.
|| Par. iii. 33.

devotes herself to the poor, and by the village maiden, who, like a wood-nymph light, betakes her to the groves? For would you observe the results of Catholicity in regard to the latter? Then repair to the hamlet of Domremy, in the marshes of Lorraine and of Champagne, where the poor labourer, Jacques d'Arc, and his wife, Isabelle Romée, are training up their little daughter, Jeanne, to follow the steps of all poor pious peasant maidens; see her going often to confession and communion, making every week her pilgrimage to a little neighbouring chapel, visiting and tending the sick, assisting the poor, receiving indigent travellers, guarding her father's sheep, following the plough, or working with her needle *. Or hear the simple tale, which Vincent of Beauvais introduces into his Mirror of History, saying, "A certain son of rich parents, finding that his father was about to marry him to the daughter of a rich and powerful noble, through aversion for the match fled secretly. As he travelled, youth-like, on foot, he turned one sultry day into the house of a poor old man, whose daughter was spinning at the door and praising God as she worked. So the young man asked her for what great gifts, being so poor, she gave such thanks to the Lord. Her answers were so wise and charming, that the youth asked her father to give her to him in marriage, who, after much delay, in order to prove the sincerity of his choice, consented; and then produced much treasure, in which, to the astonishment of all, he surpassed the greatest men of the surrounding country †." Thus all classes of the Church are assimilated, being moulded from the same gracious form. While the fervour, the pious practices, the innocence and joyous simplicity of the peasant girl are found in the daughters of nobility, the grace, the prudence, and dignity, supposed to be inherent in the upper classes, are found in the devout rustic maiden and the simplest daughters of the poor. Oh blush, blush ye who turn from them.

But this great road of popular devotion can detain our steps no longer. It has led us to the centre. To pursue our enterprise we must again turn aside and explore the next path which presents itself, though not before we communicate, ere proceeding, certain general impressions resulting from this walk, now nearly finished, which may be found needful to complete the direction with which we have been supplied. The popular devotions, which fall under a traveller's observation, however minute or subtle in their deduction, can direct him to the Catholic Church by leading him to reflect on the great distinctive principles of Christianity from which they originate, and to which in their last terms they are all referrible.

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* Berriat-Saint-Prix, Jeanne d'Arc, 181.

† Vincent. Belvacens. Spec. hist. lib. xv. 19. ap. Mag. Spec. 320.

This popular life, like that of Spaniards formerly, as if by solemn consecration given to labour and to prayer, to nature and to heaven, attests the truth of the religion which forms it. "Having great examples of virtue in their Catholic kings and princes, the Spaniards in general," says Marineus Siculus, "live in a most Christian manner. For they observe justice; they obey the precepts of the Church; they assist at the divine offices; they hear sermons; they venerate priests; they respect elders; they love their friends; they injure no one; they console the afflicted; they assist the indigent; they show the right way to those who wander astray; they admonish sinners; they pardon the penitent; they keep faith; they love the studious, and they hate the wicked,—therefore I prefer Spain to other countries: for I am delighted with the admirable morals of the Spaniards, with their singular urbanity, their noble customs, not alone those of knights and priests, but also of peasants and husbandmen *." Baptist, the Mantuan, speaks no less favourably of the French, "They know not what sedition is, nor what is discord. I add, that there is no race more religious. All—I do not speak of a thing unknown, there is no one ignorant of it—all, at the first hour, whispering their prayers, surround the divine altars with quivering lips; and for the incense alone they expend much gold, which we Italians are accustomed to make light of, as caring less for sacred temples *." The old popular devotions of the people, attested by innumerable monuments of every kind, lead the mind not to a puerile subjection to accessary forms and means, nor to rest even in the most pious and august exercises of a secondary order, but to a spiritual and affectionate contemplation of the ultimate and fundamental mysteries of the Christian religion. Hear the Rondel sung in an ancient mystery for the people—

"Humain cœur, de louer ne cesse
L'infinie et vraie bonté
De la benoite Trinité,
Et de celle en qui sanz destresse
Le filz Dieu prist humanité.
Humain cœur, de louer ne cesse
L'infinie et vraie bonté
Par qui tu as telle noblesce,
Qu'à Dieu tu as fraternité:
Donques, pour ceste affinité,
Humain cœur, de louer ne cesse
L'infinie et vraie bonté
De la benoite Trinité †."

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* Mar. Sicul. de Reb. Hispan. lib. v.

† Bapt. Mant. Exhortatio ad Insubres.

Wherever the Catholic Church is found, these great truths are found; and all the symbols, types, and shadows constituting popular devotion, which are observed by the least instructed of the poor, refer to them. Therefore, to the great concordant voice of the whole Catholic population Savonarola makes his appeal, to prove the fulfilment of the divine prophecy, which he explains in commentating on the Psalmist's words,—" Et super Filium hominis, quem confirmasti tibi: for," he continues, " this Son of man thou hast confirmed in the hearts of men, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself, that is, to thy honour. The Jew fought against Him, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself; the tyrants fought, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself; the heretics fought, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself; the philosophers and the Dialectitians, and the wise of the world fought, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself; false brethren fought, and thou hast confirmed Him to thyself; the devil fought, and the whole world fought, and prevailed not, but thou hast confirmed the Son of man in the hearts of men to thy honour *." Hence arose that perpetual interweaving of the acts of common life with practices that recalled the memory of our Redeemer, which, as we have already remarked, seems to modern protesters the extravagant and superstitious characteristics of a Catholic population; for the truth is, that to the people acquiescing in the impressions of faith, the supernatural has eclipsed all the material beauty of this present existence. " To them believing," as St. Augustin says, " the beautiful Spouse is presented at every turn—beautiful in heaven, beautiful on earth, beautiful in miracles, beautiful in sufferings, beautiful inviting to life, beautiful not heeding death, beautiful laying down life, beautiful receiving it, beautiful on the wood, beautiful in the sepulchre, beautiful in the celestial kingdom. The infirmity of the flesh does not turn aside their eyes from the splendour of that beauty †;" for the Catholic Church imparts to them the means of never losing sight of it, even in the darkest hours of the earthly pilgrimage. So this road of popular devotion through the forest of life, leads us, as we have seen, by those twelve noble trees, vast landmarks through the wilderness, which Antonio de Escobar describes, styling them the tree of the life of Christ, the tree of the festivals of Christ, the tree of the life and mysteries of the blessed Virgin, the tree of the lives of the Apostles, the tree of the founders and lights of religious orders, the tree of the angels, martyrs, confessors, and holy women, the tree of the miracles of Jesus, the tree of the persecutions of Jesus, the tree of the conferences of Jesus, the tree of the discourses of Jesus, the tree of

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* Savonarolæ in Ps. qui Reg. Is. Medit.

† S. Augustin in Ps. xliv.

the prophecies of Jesus, the tree of the parables of Jesus[*]." Under the shade of these majestic trees, in succession the people faithfully following in the track of former saints, take their daily rest, as we have observed, find sweet refreshment, and while reposing under each, point the way, when interrogated by the lost harassed wanderer who passes, inviting him to Catholicity as to the fountain of their peace. In fine, the popular devotions point to the truth of Catholicity by implying the universal and unexceptional character of its religious practices, which speculatively are recommended to all men alike, of every rank and condition, and by leading even, in point of fact, to a conformity between men of every class, which, in the absence of faith, is neither desired, approved of, nor attainable. The ideal of the whole social Catholic state emanates, it must be remembered, from the first words of the prayer of our Lord, which, says Savonarola, can raise to an ecstasy the mind that is illumined by divine light. For what, he asks, can be conceived more sweet than a consideration of the goodness of God, who desires to be the Father of all men, not alone by creation, but also by adoption, so that the Son of God and we should be brethren, according to his word,—Vade ad fratres meos[†]? Accordingly, every thing in Catholicity is common to all. "Thy truth, O Lord," says St. Augustin, "is neither mine, nor of this man, nor of that, but it is of all whom thou callest publicly to its communion, terribly admonishing us to beware of making it our private property, lest we should be deprived of it[‡]." St. Stephen of Grandmont shows that grace is conferred on man in consideration of his being in communion with the faithful people; "for," says he, "God wishes that a just man should rejoice rather in the good which he has in common with others, joined with him in faith and unity, than in any virtue which he may possess exclusive of their's; for that would be of no use to him without unity[§]." All good, in the Christian sense, depends thus on association, so that in accordance with the Catholic spirit is even the Homeric invitation—

'Αλλ' ἄγ', ὁ μὲν σχεθέτω, ἵν' ὁμῶς τερπώμεθα πάντες[‖].

"Would you have been happy," asks St. Bonaventura, "if God had made the world for you alone? Suppose the case. Where then would have been that gracious and useful human society which is so consoling and delightful? The more happiness is multiplied, the greater share of it does each enjoy; therefore, in

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[*] Ant. de Escobar, in Evang. Comment.

[†] Expos. Orat. Domin.

[‡] Confess. lib. ii. c. 24.

[§] S. Stephani Grandem. Liber Sententiarum, cap. 10.

[‖] Od. viii. 542.

loving all, God loves you especially. His love is one, but not exclusive—singular, but not solitary—diffusive, but not divided; common and singular at the same time, so that every individual has common and special reasons to love God *." The devotions, the exercises, the practices of the Catholic religion, are therefore like its faith, intended for all alike, for every one of the household of faith; as Pope Innocent III. says, "a principe usque ad plebem, a populo usque ad publicanum †." Such is the theory, and, in point of fact, such is the result; for, in regard to the solemn mysteries of faith, all are united in the same devotion, at the same seasons. "Seculars," say the Councils, without distinction, "who do not receive communion at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, are not to be considered Catholics, nor counted amongst Catholics ‡." All sang in common the same hymn and mystic prose, like that of Adam of St. Victor—

"Quos sub umbra sacramenti,
Jesu, pascis in præsenti,
Tuo vultu satia.
Splendor, Patri coeterne,
Nos hinc transfer ad paternæ
Claritatis gaudia. Amen."

"Throughout Spain generally," says Marineus Siculus, "noble and learned men, as also the people and the ignorant, are most obedient to the precepts of the Church and the commands of Christ. Some, at least once in the year, others twice, others thrice, many four times, and the majority, both of the old and young, even down to boys, ten times a year, or every month, make their confession to their parish priest, or to some other. And, on the whole, in my judgment, there is not upon the earth a race more Christian than the Spaniards §." In the popular chant, beginning

"El octavo rey Alfonso,
Con muy gran caballeria,"

it is expressly commemorated, that before the battle of the Navas de Tolosa, on the Monday, before dawn, all, from the highest to the lowest, heard mass, and received the blessed sacrament. Lorenzo de Medicis, writing from Florence to his son John, who was at Rome, exhorts him, like the simplest parent among the rustic population, to assiduity in these most solemn acts. "Last year," he says, "I was greatly consoled on

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* Amatorium.

† Inn. III. de Sacro Altaris Mysterio, lib. iii. c. 9.

‡ Regino Abb. Prum. De Eccles. Discip. lib. ii. 353.

§ De Reb. Hispan. lib.

hearing that you go to confession, and receive the holy sacrament of the Eucharist frequently, and that too without any one persuading you. This I consider very good and salutary, and I know no better way to be preserved in the grace of God than to continue in it. This I regard as the most useful advice that I can give to you." Antoine du Verdier, Sieur de Vauprivaz, cites this letter as admirable, in his diverse lessons. I only produce it, with the rest, to show that the highest and most illustrious men, in regard to religious exercises, evinced the same simplicity as the people, the same lively faith, the same unalterable practical conviction; and, in fact, as Trithemius remarked, if there had been no other reason, the pious confraternities of the Church, in honour either of the blessed Virgin, or of some saints, as those he cites, of St. Anne, of St. Sebastian, and of St. James, composed of pilgrims, could not suffer to be dissimilar in devotion those who were united in the bonds of such brotherhood *. The presidents of the parliaments in France used to recite the rosary on their mules, as they proceeded to their courts. The admiral of Catalonia, "when in his dungeon, a captive with the Moors, according to his ancient custom," says the chant, "before daybreak rose twice to pray †." The Seigneur de Montigny, arriving at the Bastille at four o'clock in the morning, to announce to the Duc de Biron his approaching trial, heard that, according to his usual custom, he was already risen, and at his prayers; so that he waited till they were finished before entering his chamber ‡. With the same simplicity the great are represented keeping the religious festivals; as where we read, in Warkworth's Chronicle, "In the castle of Dunstanboroughe my Lord of Warrewike kept the feest of Saint John Baptist." In seasons of penitence, the king is like the poor, as we behold him in the Spanish chant on the death of the Carvajals, beginning, "Valas me, nuestra Señora." "At Riviere the good King Ferdinand § passed the Lent, from Ash-Wednesday till Maundy Thursday, without shaving his beard or combing his hair. An arm-chair was his bed, a stone his pillow. Forty poor ate each day at his table, and on what the poor left, the king dined. With a golden wand in his hand, he superintended the service of their table." In short, with regard to this whole sphere of ideas and actions, every man of rank and riches, who has faith, wishes to love and practise what the people practise, and is ready to repeat the words of the ancient poet, of which their author knew not all the wisdom, saying, what the humble

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* De Laudibus S. Annæ.

† Damas Heriard, Romancero général.

‡ Pierre Matthieu, Hist. de Hen. IV. v.

§ IV.

vulgar admits and approves, that, too, I admit and approve—

τὸ πλῆθος ὅ τι τὸ φαυλότερον
ἐνόμισε χρῆταί τε, τόδε τοι λέγοιμ' ἄν[*]:

or to say, with Plato, guided by the same great principle, *Συγχωρῶ δὴ τόγε τοσοῦτον καὶ ἐγὼ τοῖς πολλοῖς*[†]. And indeed, why should exalted laymen, most separated by learning from the crowd, affect a distinction and superiority of judgment above the simple population of the Church, when the most illustrious pontiffs sought to identify themselves with the people in regard to every thing that belonged to the practices and associations of a holy life? "Gratanter loco idiotæ Amen respondebimus," says Ives de Chartres, alluding to a question arising out of those practices[‡]; and Lanfranc's words are for ever memorable. "For what you say," he writes, "that this Burgundian was such in the opinion of the vulgar, I beg that you will count me amongst them,—me etiam cum vulgo deputas, certissimum habeto tu, indubitanter credant amici mei atque Ecclesia Christi, quia si etiam deesset mihi auctoritas, atque ratio, quibus fidem meam tueri possem, mallem tamen cum vulgo esse rusticus et idiota Catholicus, quam tecum existere curialis, atque facetus hæreticus[§]."

While leaving this sweet delightful road of popular devotion, a sorrowful signal yields a last direction, pointing to the deplorable work of those who, as antagonists of Catholicity, sought to suppress it to mankind for ever. "The people, muddied, thick, and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers," furnish that signal now. "The Germans," says Audin, "had a song before the coming of Luther." It ran thus,—"In the valley of Sarnen here and there sweet flowers grow. There stands amidst verdant meadows the shepherd's cot. There we see it smiling and peaceful, peeping from the shady grove. On the mountains of Sarnen the air is pure, the lark sings from them with the break of morning, the living water gushes out in many fountains, the shepherds, in the simplicity of their gladness, adorn their hats with flowers—they sing for joy; ah! there indeed all is well!" "Unhappy Germany," continues this author, "thou wilt sing that song no more! One of thy own children has pierced thy heart. The bell calling from its tower to the evening prayer, the cross placed as a luminous beacon on the church top, the image of the Virgin in a frame of foliage on the way-side, the incense at the altar which ascended to the eternal throne, the figure of the patron saint placed as a guardian by the peasant at

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[*] Eurip. Bacch. 430.

[†] De Legibus, lib. ii.

[‡] Ivon. Carnot. Epist. 189.

[§] B. Lanfranci Liber de Corpore et Sang. Domini.

his farm gate, the holy water, in which youth and age dips its finger every night and morning, the statues of the saints ranged round the choirs of churches;" we may add—the union of all classes in the sweetness of a universal worship,—"all have yielded to the new word of a man—word of dissension and of death [*]."

O nation miserable, with cloudy sophists sceptered as thy guides, when shalt thou see thy wholesome days again? Well, they have taken another road; they are gone; and with them go these thoughts. On to the centre, numbering our Ave-Maries with our beads.

CHAPTER X.

THE ROAD OF CHURCHES.

Limes, mixed with cedars, cast a solemn shade around us; and there is that deep silence interrupted only by the humming of the bees which the ancients thought itself adorable [†]. An observation of the material monuments which ministered to that popular devotion, of which the guidance served us so well upon the last road, can lead us with an equal attraction to the same true centre of the spiritual forest, representing the supreme end, towards which man is appointed to direct his life. The ancients, as we find from the travels of Pausanias, could not advance a step through Greece without meeting a temple, though often little remarkable: but nearly the whole world can bear witness to the marvellous creative fecundity of the Christian religion; so that we cannot direct our journey long in any direction without coming to some truly noble monument of that faith which has overthrown the temples of the idols, and established over the earth the worship of the true God. In cities no house could be at a distance of many minutes' walk from some church or chapel. In Rome there are as many churches as days in the year, ancient piety having left there as many stations as the sun has in the sky, each of them being, as Gerbet says, "the monumental expression of some mystery of faith, or of some great example of virtue drawn from the lives of the saints; so that if we could embrace them in view all at once, we should have before our eyes the plan of the whole of religion [‡]." But churches or oratories

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[*] Hist. de Leon X.

[†] Plin. N. H. lib. xii. 2.

[‡] Esquisse de Rome Chrét.

stood every where, not excepting lonely deserts, to direct the wanderer. "The Tanagræans," says Pausanias, "appear to me to be more religious than all the other people of Greece, on account of their having built their temples in places separated from the commerce of men, at a distance from all houses, in spots to which no one would ever penetrate, but in order to offer worship *." Even for the gratification of such views, the Catholic Church has provided abundantly. In the forests peopled by wild animals, where the fair oak affords a leafy dome, or on the summit of mountains, or within the grottoes on the barren shore, she assembled her sacred choirs, and raised her structures that announce the precincts of our Redeemer's fold. Within the little lonely isle there stands the consecrated tower, "where tapers burned, and mass was sung," pointing to direct well all who see it from afar.

On the top of a wild mountain, St. Gregory of Tours describes a church and cloister, served by monks, where Epargne, bishop of Clermont, used to retire to pass the whole Lent in solitude †. Such retreats were general, having given rise to oratories like that of St. Sabas, in natural caves near torrents, or to those found on shores under gnarled chestnuts, forming with their vast expansive trunks a kind of wooden cavern, amidst the dark canopy of leaves, where temples often stood, not of marble and gold, but such as Nereus and the Nereïdes are said to hold,

> ——"Trabibus densis lucoque umbrosa vetusto ‡."

Even in countries long wasted by the persecution of misbelievers, we find every where either the ruins of the churches, or the churches themselves, though desecrated and misapplied. In cities and suburbs, on the banks of rivers, in the fields, if you turn off the modern road to the right or left, on the tops of hills, there are still the walls that many hundred years ago received the print of crosses at their consecration, still perhaps remaining, as at Westminster. There is also at least the chapel where men worship according to the ancient faith; and then when persons born in such lands first pass to others where Catholicity retains its ancient churches and cathedrals, how deep is the impression produced on merely passing by them! The stranger will remember the day and hour when, after landing on the continent for the first time, he saw the church which heresy had never wrested from the purpose for which it was originally built. He was only an uninstructed lad, intent on pleasure; but the vision

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* Lib. ix. † Lib. ii. c. 21. ‡ Ovid. Met. xi. 10.

of that grey structure, sweet with the smoke of incense, the sound of that bell, the spectacle of that altar, and of those kneeling suppliants, produced a certain unutterable sensation of pleasure, inexplicable to himself, of which no time can ever obliterate or even weaken the force. Many, no doubt, have experienced similar impressions, which in English persons of more mature age are said to inspire melancholy. In either case the signal is supplied to all who tread this road of churches. There stands the cross, and often the saint, upon the pinnacle; and the poet's question is suggested,—

"Quid sacrata facis vacua inter nubila cœli ?
Tam procul a terris cur pia signa tenes ?
Numquid ut es, clavemque vocant te carmina vatum,
Æthereas nobis vis reserare fores * ?"

Mabillon on his journeys used to alight from horseback to pray whenever he came in sight of a church ; and many can still be remarked who follow the same custom. Poets therefore are not left guideless, though marking only the influence of atmospheric changes upon monuments of art, as when they sing,—

"Thou too, aërial pile ! whose pinnacles
Point from one shrine like pyramids of fire,
Obeyest in silence their sweet solemn spells,
Clothing in hues of heaven thy dim and distant spire,
Around whose lessening and invisible height
Gather among the stars the clouds of night."

In some places formerly not even the midnight darkness could interrupt the utility of this sign ; for those lanthorn towers which Mabillon remarked at the church of the Abbey of Luxeuil, and at that of Bonneval, near Chartres, to light the pilgrims by night coming to the matin song †, were not solitary instances. "It appeareth," says Stowe, speaking of a London church, "that the lanthorns on the top of this steeple were meant to have been glazed, and lights in them placed nightly in the winter, whereby travellers to the city might have the better sight thereof, and not to miss of their ways."

But now advancing on this road, the traveller approaches and proceeds to examine the external structure, asking perhaps in the first place, who raised it magnificently thus ? The humility of the architect has concealed his name. Enough for him, that

——————"His hand was known
In heaven, by many a tower'd structure high,
Where scepter'd angels held their residence."

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* Pompei Ugonii Poemata.

† Iter Germanic. 9.

How many signals are before us which point out the true faith! I shall pass hastily before these, as many better skilled are now observing them, content with remarking here that some deep religious or tender thought has determined the form of structure, an observation of which will show how naturally men are invited by the material edifice to pursue investigations into the ideas of which it is the monumental expression. Pope Innocent III. observes that under the Old Testament the entrance of the temple was from east to west, to signify that all before the passion of Christ tended to the setting, that is, to death; but that now it is from west to east, to figure our ascent to glory [*].

Mark the sculpture on these gates, which explains the direction further. The west signifies darkness, and consequently ignorance. The centre of the west portal admits therefore of nothing inferior to Jesus Christ, who is represented on it, as the monumental expression of the great supreme doctrine to be taught to those coming from ignorance to Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. The north is the region of ice and storms, that is, of the hardened heart and the fury of the passions. To the man who comes from the darkness of ignorance only light is wanting, but he who allows himself to be subjected by the prince of the north will love his chains. Therefore on the north portal the old architects represented the last judgment, or the wheel of fortune; and hence the portal to the north, from which St. Augustin sees the prodigal son returning to his paternal roof, is consecrated to her who is the refuge of sinners and the mother of mercy. At Freybourg, in Brisgau, on the north gate, is the revolt and punishment of the angel, and at St. John at Lyons, over the north transept, are seen the rebel angels precipated into hell. Hence for these reasons the baptismal fonts are placed at the north-west corner of churches. The south portals are consecrated to saints, martyrs, and doctors; for there is no example of the south being taken in an evil sense by the mystic or symbolic writers or architects of Christian antiquity [†].

But, mark! these foundations are not in straight lines. The axis of the choir at Noyon does not correspond directly with that of the nave. This inclination from left to right, observable in many churches, arises from the pious desire of imitating the position of our Saviour on the cross, when inclinato capite expiravit [‡].

Again, the Basilica of Nola was not constructed as usual, fronting the east, but it was placed so as to face the Basilica of

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[*] De Sacro Alt. Myst. lib. ii. c. 22.

[†] Les PP. Cahier et Martin. Mélanges d'Archéologie, i. 82.

[‡] Vitet, Notre Dame de Noyon.

St. Felix *. The court before the entrance is called the Parvis or Paradisus; and here only the most holy and remarkable persons were allowed burial †. The instruction to be derived from external walls might evidently occupy us long. While some learned antiquaries are wondering at the grotesque monsters and personifications of vices represented on the aërial galleries, the Catholic reads, in this architectural language, the great doctrine of the true religion, that the legions of the enemy of human salvation are soaring over the heads of the faithful, to lead them from the right way, against whom there is no true refuge or shelter, but in the Church ‡. Attached to the south end of one of the crosses of the western transept of Lincoln Cathedral, is an elegant porch, called a Galilee, open on three sides, the fourth leading by folding-doors into the church. There were formerly such porches at the western extremity of all churches. In these public penitents were stationed, dead bodies deposited previous to interment, and women allowed to visit their relatives who were monks of that church. We gather from a passage in Gervase, that when a woman applied to see a relative who was a monk, she was answered, "He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall you see him," and hence the name. Not alone the edifice itself, but perhaps several objects appended to it have significations. Round the exterior walls of the church of San Juan de los Reyes at Toledo, founded by King Ferdinand V. and Queen Isabella, were suspended a vast number of great chains and irons, with which Christians had been bound while captives with the Moors at Granada, who, on the recovery of that city, offered them to the Church in memory of their redemption §. But not to be detained by such details, let us be satisfied with a brief glance at one order of symbols, presented in the mystic zoology of which the Fathers Martin and Cahier have given so curious an exposition. The sculptured eagles at Strasburg are training their young ones to fix their eyes upon the sun, to represent the work of human regeneration by Jesus Christ. The pelicans on so many churches, that feed their young with their own blood, represent Christ. The calandres, carved on many others, convey a high lesson; for these are described as white birds, endowed with such a faculty that a sick person, by regarding one of them, can learn whether he is to live or die; for if the sickness be mortal, the calandre turns its face from him, but if he is to recover, it looks steadily

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* Div. Paulini Epist. xii. ad Sev.

† Steph. Baluzii notæ ad Reginonem, 559.

‡ Les PP. Cahier et Martin, Mélanges d'Archéologie, i. 76.

§ Marinei Siculi de Reb. Hisp. lib. xix.

at him, places its beak on his mouth, and with a breath extracts the disease from him; and then, flying up to the sun, burns away the disease and dies, while the sick man recovers his health. These birds, then, on churches, represent Christ rejecting the Jews and choosing the Gentiles, taking our miseries, giving us life by his death, ascending and leading captivity captive; as St. Hilary of Poictiers says, "Omnium peccata dimittens, omnium infirmitates auferens, et malorum voluptatum insidentium incentiva depellens passione corporis sui, secundum prophetarum dicta, infirmitates humanæ imbecillitatis absorbens *." The unicorns on churches represent the mystery of the incarnation, and the taking of Christ captive by the Jews; for the horn was considered a sovereign antidote—and the animal itself as capable of being taken by the hunters, only by means of a virgin, before whom it lays aside its ferocity. Thus it is but fair to infer, from even a brief glance at the outward walls of these churches, that the men who built them, whatever some may now choose to pretend, had some knowledge of the fundamental mysteries of the Gospel. But let us enter; the doors stand open. Here then again is another sign; for wherever the Catholic faith does not exist, the temple has closed gates: "the ministers," as Rupert prophetically says, "forsaking the service of the altars, despising the sanctuary, and neglecting the sacrifice, hastening to assist at the games of the quoit and of the course †," showing that they would be well content if they could follow the custom of the temple of Cybele at Thebes, which used to be opened only one day in the year, into which Pausanias, happening to be at Thebes on that particular day, was permitted to enter and see the statue ‡. "You have led me," says a foreigner to a modern English author, after travelling with him from Canterbury to the Tweed, "through a land of closed churches and hushed bells, of unlighted altars and unstoled priests. Is England beneath an interdict?" A curious instance of the inviolability of the Catholic usage formerly in England occurs in the chronicles of Jocelin of Brakelond; for he relates, that a fire having broken out at the shrine of St. Edmond through negligence, which the monks wished to conceal, as the church could not be closed, discovery was made by some pilgrims who came very early the next morning, and who, as they went peering about, observed the traces of it. The open doors themselves, therefore, send us back to old times of Catholicity, when a contravention of this usage would cause general dismay, as when Chilperic ordered the gates of the church of

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* In Ps. cxxxviii.

† 1 Mach. i. ap. Rupert. de Victoria Verbi Dei, lib. ix.

‡ Pausan. lib. ix.

Tours to be closed, and guards placed at each,—" quod non sine tædio populis fuit," as St. Gregory of Tours observes*: and indeed the usage of the moderns in this respect recals the policy of an early antagonist; for Evarix, king of the Arian Goths, coming into France, made this order general, with a determined view to oppose faith; for, as the same historian says, "he ordered the approaches of the churches to be blocked up with fences of thorns—scilicet ut raritas ingrediendi oblivionem faceret fidei†." But further, when any guardian is appointed to watch over the doors of a Catholic church, in general his simplicity yields another sign, as the Abbé Gerbet remarks, when speaking of the absence of all ostentation in Rome. "I love," he says, "the poor cabin, and the little boy that guides you. This shows how very sure Rome must feel of her majesty, thus disdaining to turn to account the noble interest attached to certain monuments." Even in Paris the lay officers, who conduct the internal arrangements of churches, are saluted as friends by the faithful. But we have passed the threshold; and, lo! what a solemn calm impression arises from the interior building itself, as if no spirit can resist the benediction once invoked when the school sang here, "Pax æterna ab Æterno huic domui! pax perennis, verbum Patris, sit pax huic domui, pacem pius consolator huic præstet domui‡!" for Catholic churches, we must remember, are not merely opened, they are consecrated. Brantome relates that a certain young libertine, the Captain Bartholemé, noted for scoffing at religious ceremonies, after being long intreated by M. d'Arramont to accompany him to a church, consented for his sake, and one day they both entered it together. No sooner had he passed the threshold, than he felt, as he said afterwards, his soul pierced with such a devout reverence, that his conversion was effected from that moment. So he prostrated himself before his God, and made his prayers so fervently, that never afterwards did he return to his errors and follies, being truly grateful to the friend who had been the cause of his happiness§. Indeed this place is unlike other places upon earth. Truth and wisdom must be here, since "all solemn things should answer solemn accidents." Perhaps all prevailing heresies still slept unheard of when these walls were raised—

> "Templa Dei saxo venerabar structa vetusto."

What lessons have we from the mere antiquity of the churches! Witness that of our Lady of the Pillar in Sarragossa, as old as

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* Hist. lib. v. † Id. lib. ii.

‡ Rom. Pont. de Bened. Prim. lap. pro Eccles. Æd.

§ Vol. vi.

Christianity in Spain; witness those churches in Arles, of St. Tropheme, built in the year 626—of our Lady the Greater, built in 450, in which, three years afterwards, thirty-four bishops held a council, as an inscription there testifies—of St. Croix, lost in the night of time—of St. Julien, consecrated by Pope Calixtus II. in 1119, containing the relics of the abbot St. Anthony—of St. Lucien, with its altar on which mass was said during the Pagan persecutions,—all in one city; witness near the same that abbey of St. Cesareus, founded in 508, built by St. Cesarius, and that of Montmajour built by Childebert, where Cassien's rule was once observed *. Each stone of such churches seems to utter—

"Signa tibi dicam; tu condita mente teneto †."

Our poor churches, too, seized by Anglicans, have seen other men. Therefore an English author says, "Wouldst thou know the beauty of holiness? go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good master sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church, think of the piety that has kneeled there; the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there, with no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee ‡."

The impression is the same whether it be a vast cathedral or the smallest consecrated pile. The old church of Mount Serrat, in which sixty lamps burnt night and day, was so little that it received no daylight, unless from the door and from a very small window §. Some churches, on the contrary, seem to have no material provision to please the taste for mysticism; but, notwithstanding this deficiency, to which now perhaps too much importance is attached by some—"Nam diligentiam in supervacuis affectare non nostrum est," the Catholic spirit of reverence will find means of attesting its existence no less in these. A French traveller in Spain, speaking of the crypt of the martyrs in the Carthusian monastery of Monte-Sagrado, which he expected to find obscure and mysterious, but to his disappointment found lightsome and freshly decorated, makes an admirable observation, which should be presented to those who seem to think that the impression of which we speak requires absolutely a certain previous study on the part of architects and decorators; for he says, "We superficial people have need of the picturesque to arrive at the reli-

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* Du Port, Hist. de l'Eglise d'Arles. † Æn. iii.

‡ Elia. § Dom Montegut, Hist. de Mt. Ser. 29.

gious sentiment; but the devout Catholic thinks little about the play of light and shade, or the architectural proportions. He knows that under this altar of indifferent form are the bones of saints who died for the faith; and that suffices for him *." What he requires too, we might add, "is the spirit of the place, which does not depend upon the style of architecture that has been followed in the construction, being the result, not of any human art arranging lines and columns according to the Gothic or Italian model, each equally beautiful perhaps, but of the divine blessing, which descends upon all alike, when invoked in the consecrating prayer that the invincible cross might guard the threshold, that to all visiting it there might be peace with abundance, sobriety with modesty, redundance with mercy,—redundantia cum misericordia; that all disquietude and calamity might depart far from it, with want and pestilence, and the invasions of evil spirits; that here, purified and blessed, in every corner and recess, might ever reign the joy of quiet, the grace of hospitality, the abundance of fruit, the reverence of religion, copious salvation; and that those frequenting it might have with them the angel of peace, of chastity, of charity, and of truth †." Nevertheless, in a vast multitude of instances the monumental expression is in harmony with the sublime essentials found in all Catholic churches; so that, in regard to art, which works after the model of the Creator's own design, the man who enters them sometimes finds, "as if all Paradise could, by the simple opening of a door, let itself in upon him," though still not that of a wrapt genius exulting in material beauty, but of a renovated heart bathed in the fragrancy of heaven. So one of the English strangers, furthest from Catholicity, says of the church of the Escurial, that "the majesty of the place takes away the beholder's breath. An awe creeps over mortal man, who feels that the Holy of Holies overshadows him." On the eighth of July, in 1401, the clergy of Seville, as the cathedral threatened ruin, decreed as follows: "Fagamos una Eglesia tal, que los venideros post nos, nos tengar por locos;" that is, "Let us build such a church that those who come after us may take us to have been mad," and the result was the present church, of which no praise can convey an adequate idea. Solomon, about to build the temple, said to Hiram, "Send me a skilful man that knoweth how to work in gold and in silver, in brass and in iron, in purple, in scarlet, and in blue, and that hath skill in carving ‡." The construction of a Catholic church has called, in like manner, all arts into requisition, which, by their results, point significantly to a type thus supplied in the holy Scriptures. The earliest

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* Theoph. Gautier, Voyage en Espagne.

† De Eccles. Consec.

‡ 2 Par. 2.

churches were the richest, so that when the monks of Citeaux, with a laudable motive, no doubt, rejected ornaments in their churches, Mabillon observes, they were blamed by all the neighbourhood as innovators *. Moreover, the beauty is all significative and subservient to instruction, so that, even after desecration, the ideographic painting still points in the right direction; for, in general, notwithstanding the demolition and stripping of churches to suit the cold rites of Protestantism, those who enter them must be content to see all things—

> "Through the dim gothic glass of pictured saints,
> Casements, through which the sun-set streams, like sun-rise,
> On long pearl-colour'd beards, and crimson crosses,
> And gilded crosiers, and cross'd arms, and cowls,
> And helms, and twisted armour, and long swords;
> All the fantastic furniture of windows,
> Dim with brave knights and holy hermits, whose
> Likeness and fame alike rest on some panes
> Of crystal, which each rattling wind proclaims
> As frail as any other life or glory †."

But how many things in Catholic churches arrest the stranger's eye, which can awaken a desire that truth alone can afterwards assuage! A modern traveller alludes to these when describing the church of St. Mark at Venice. "It is," he says, "a grand, a dreamy structure, of immense proportions, golden with old mosaics, redolent of perfumes, dim with the smoke of incense, costly in treasure of precious stones and metals, glittering through iron bars, holy with the bodies of deceased saints, rainbow-hued with windows of stained glass, dark with carved woods and coloured marbles, obscure in its vast heights and lengthened distances, shining with silver lamps and winking lights, unreal, fantastic, solemn, inconceivable throughout." This grandeur and beauty must not be overlooked in estimating the signals yielded by the material edifice; for with the doctrines involved in such expression they point to faith: without it they disappear. "There is at Alexandre," says Sir John Maundeville, "a faire chirche, alle white withouten peynture: and so ben alle the othere chirches, that weren of the Cristene men, alle white with inne. For the Panimes and the Sarrazynes made hem white, for to fordon the ymages of seyntes that weren peynted on the walles." Such is every where the work of men who reject the Catholic faith; "these things," as Morris says, "the heathen heart reproves, saying, The church needs not wrought gold for clothing, nor frankincense, nor lights symbolical, despising all the while the bitterness of myrrh, and neglect-

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* An. Ord. S. Ben. tom. v. c. 71.

† Byron.

ing ever all that excites to suffer hallowed pain." So they pursue their work of suppression, spoliation, denudation, and destruction, down to the present day; with many too, alas! approving their measures as conducive to the good of the commonwealth; though whether the people become richer after sacrilege is a question that France, Spain, and Portugal ought now to have no difficulty in answering, so as to deter future nations from pillaging the shrine.

But not to dwell on such considerations here, let us remark that all within the Catholic churches is symbolical of divine truth; and as a great modern author says, "Let us not proudly think that we may walk unblamed amid the symbols cast around our pathway here; but rather, with rebuke and self-reproach, let those who are tempted to disparage them recal to mind—

"How Satan coming on the festal day,
With angels to present himself to God;
Himself all blinded knew not where he was,
Until the appalling voice shook out of him
The story of his hateful wanderings *."

This beauty of the material Church can suggest many reflections as to the truth of the religion which employs it. Let us hear how the monk Theophilus speaks of it in his Schedule of diverse arts. "The great prophet, David," saith he, "whom God chose for the simplicity and humility of his mind, concentrating all his affections in the love of his Creator, uttered these among other words, 'Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ.' And though a man of such authority and capacious intellect, understood by that the habitation of the celestial court, in which God presides in the midst of his ineffable glory, or else the retreat of a devout breast and of a pure heart, in which God truly dwells; yet it is certain that he desired also the decoration of the material house of God, which is the place of prayer. He had read in Exodus the orders of God to Moses for the construction of the tabernacle; and he thence learned, by pious reflection, that God took pleasure in the works of decoration, which he confided to the teaching and authority of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, my beloved son, doubt not, but believe, with true faith, that the Spirit of God has filled your heart when you have adorned his house with such a variety of beautiful arts. Animated by the hopes of virtues, O my dear son, you have approached the house of God with faith—you have adorned it with magnificence, covering the ceilings and the walls with various colours, and exposing as it were an image of paradise, with its spring producing flowers and grass and leaves, and its immortal army of saints and the crowns which

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* Morris.

distinguish them. You have caused the creature to praise the Creator and proclaim Him admirable in his works. The eye of man knows not where to fill its gaze. If he raises it to the ceilings, they are rich as costliest drapery,—if to the walls, they are a picture of heaven. If he regards the flood of light through the windows, he admires the inestimable brilliancy of the glass, and the diversity of its precious works. If a faithful soul witness in painting the passion of Jesus Christ, it is penetrated with compunction; if it behold the torments which the saints endured in their bodies and their recompenses in the eternal existence, it returns to the practices of a better life; if it sees represented the joys of heaven, and the tortures and flames of hell, it is animated with hope for its good actions, and struck with terror at the thought of its sins. Courage then, O you who are happy before God and before men now, to be still happier hereafter, whose labours and zeal offer holocausts to God —be inflamed henceforth with a more efficacious and laborious ardour. We have shown you how to paint, how to illuminate, and how to adorn with stained glass. It remains to teach you to complete what is yet wanting to the celebration of the divine mysteries—namely, the chalices, candelabras, thuribuls, vases for the sacred oils, the cruets, the shrines and reliquaries of holy bodies, the crosses, missals, and other objects necessary for the use of the Church *."

Although the signals supplied by art in general will best be considered when we enter upon the distinct path which yields them, we cannot avoid casting a hasty glance at them here, as the particular class of pictures found in churches must evidently supply a direct guidance to the Catholic faith. Sometimes the subject represented directs us to reflect on the history, doctrine, or mysteries of religion. Events from the Old and New Testament are painted on the walls of many churches, as Cardinal Palæotus recommends †. On those of the church of the Saviour at Rome, was painted the whole history of the Bible, as the Vicars of Pope Adrian observed at the Council of Nice; and Melanus says that it was a general custom in monasteries to represent the entire sacred history in this manner. Profound views arising out of the holy text are also suggested by the medieval paintings in churches, which therefore direct us to Catholicism as the source of that perfection. Thus the grapes of the promised land carried by two men are represented in the middle ages as a symbol of Christ crucified. The two bearers play a significant part. He who goes before and carries the mysterious grapes without seeing them, represents the Jewish

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* Theophili Diversarum Artium Schedula, lib. iii. Prolog.

† Card. Gab. Palæoti de Imaginibus Sacris, ii. 30.

people. First called, and yet it sees not the sense of the prophecies. The Gentiles converted are signified by him who follows, having unceasingly before their eyes the author and finisher of their faith *. Ephraem, representing the Gentiles, preferred to his eldest brother, or the Jews, by the Patriarch Jacob by the crossing of his hands over them, is represented in the cathedral of Bourges, by the window of which the hieratic title is the substitution of the Gentiles for the Jewish people by the cross †. Again, the synagogue is represented by a woman having her eyes covered, and with her head inclined, from which her crown falls,—the Church by a woman veiled and crowned, with a chalice, into which she receives the blood of Christ ‡. The Catholic faith is thus indicated in a manner sufficiently clear.

"Sometimes," says Durandus, "Paradise is represented by painting in churches, to allure men with the hopes of reward; sometimes hell, to deter them from vices by fear of punishment; and sometimes flowers and trees are painted there, to represent good works §." The Père Cahier, speaking of the majestic window of the Apocalypse in the cathedral of Bourges says, "I confess that this grand spectacle exercises on me a kind of fascination whenever I seat myself before it. More than once it has happened to me to forget the flight of moments, fixed as I was by the majesty of so solemn, grave, and profound an instruction ||." But mark how these stained windows alone throw light on the history of the Catholic Church. Vor dreissig jahren war die Bibel unbekant, die Propheten ungenant, und gehalten als weren sie unmüglich zu verstehen ¶. For doctor Martin Luther, after drinking, to give himself the recreation of announcing that he was wanting to the world in order to make known the names of the prophets, might be a sufficiently original mode of jest, if he had not been a reformer; but what a droll faith in the word of the symposiarch must his companions have had for them to take the trouble of transmitting such an impertinence to posterity? The church windows were sufficient to confute him; for the cathedral of Bourges was not the only one in which the names of the prophets were constantly before the eyes of the people in letters as large as the hand. It was a grand spectacle and a magnificent lesson for the faithful to behold that continued series beginning with Sinai through the prophets, apostles, and the succession of bishops on the same chair,

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* Monog. de Bourges, 50.

† Id. 25.

‡ Id. 7.

§ Rationale.

|| Monog. de Bourges, 231.

¶ Colloquia doctoris Martini Lutheri.

—the patriarchs completing the chain to the point whence the first man left the hands of God, all attesting that Jesus Christ who is now, was also then, and will be for ever, salvation. The thread of truth is never broken, in this solemn march of ages, in their progress towards the Messiah, or in their descent from Him, the sole difference consisting in this, that the good news then conveyed in promises belong now to history, which difference is signified at Chartres by the four great prophets, carrying on their shoulders the four evangelists, with this comment in words inscribed opposite them ;—"Quod prophetæ de Christo et Ecclesia Domini prædixerunt, hoc Evangelistæ evangelium scribentes pleniter exposuerunt *."

Here is then already much to make some erring teachers pause. On the other hand, the paintings in many churches have often besides a particular local interest, from representing persons and events connected with that neighbourhood, which can all direct men to recognize the truth of Catholicity. Thus, at Nice, in the cathedral, were portraits of the three hundred and eighteen bishops who assisted at the council †. In the church of Wierre-Effroy is an ancient painting which was formerly in the cathedral of Boulogne, representing St. Godeliebe, whose father's castle was near, giving in alms the single loaf allowed for her own support in the prison, while Bertulph, her cruel husband, and his mother, are shown watching her from over a wall. In some churches the pictures indicated their connexion with some religious order whose saints are represented. Thus, in nearly all the English convents of the order of the Trinity, St. Robert of Kanenesbury, in the county of Richmond, who from being a hermit had embraced the order and died in 1239, used to be painted holding the aspersorium, and threatening the enemy of the human race ‡. In all these instances painters were warned from daring to represent the saints with the countenances of living secular men who could be recognized §. "To paint the saints with the countenances of living men is," says Molanus, "a nefarious mode of abusing holy images ||." From no church, however, were representations of the holy habits of the religious orders excluded. Henry Suso found such relief from beholding them, that in order to make more sweet the solitude of his little chapel, he persuaded with entreaties a certain painter to paint on its walls the ancient abbots and hermits of the desert, in-

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* Id. 293.

† Emeric David, Hist. de la Peinture au Moyen Age.

‡ Baron, Annales Ord. SS. Trin. 114.

§ Card. G. Palæoti de Sac. Im. lib. ii. c. 23.

|| Mol. Hist. S. Imag. ii. c. 37.

scribing under them some of their short sentences calculated to console the afflicted*. O how impressive are the pictures even of nameless monks when seen thus kneeling or contemplating in churches! though as long as danger could be imagined from the existence of Paganism, the caution of the Church did not permit sculptured images in complete form to be admitted, according to the discipline which still remains in the east, and which continued in the west till the tenth century, many basso relievos, in stone and ivory and metal, had existed in churches from an antiquity that mounted to the primitive Christians; and we find Cardinal Palæotus expressly treating on the right manner of dealing with such ancient images obscured by time†. The plan he recommends, we may be sure, was not to sweep them away. Their antiquity added force to the instruction conveyed by them. As Epiphanius remarks, the tablets, vestments, and precious repositories used by the Christians in the times of Pagan persecution preserved to this day, prove how early was the use of holy images with Christians‡. In respect to paintings, the middle ages did but follow the first times of the Church. In an old document, painting in regard to the churches, is styled honestas parietum §. Burchard, bishop of Halberstadt, accordingly embellished his cathedral, as his historian says, "with all the pomps of painting—ædificationem picturis famosè pompavit ||." Charlemagne's law only decreed an observance of the ancient custom of covering with painting the whole interior surface of churches, which, as Emeric David observes, were not considered finished unless paintings were added ¶. No one born and educated within the pale of the Christian Church could have conceived the necessity of defending this part of Catholic discipline, if Jews, Mahometans, and other misbelievers had not been pleased to attack it, pretending that it was leading men back to the views and practices of the Pagan world; for, as Cardinal Palæotus says, "From the time when the evangelic truth first shone, no one has ever been so rude as not to know that one thing was the image of St. John the Evangelist, of marble, and another that saint dwelling in heaven; for the prediction of the prophets of old has been fulfilled, the time came when no one was deceived by the superstition of idols; and all knew God from the least to the greatest, and all the names of idols were obliterated from the earth**." Therefore, Baptist the Mantuan most justly says,—

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* Vita ejus.

† De Sac. Im. lib. v. 19.

‡ Ap. Molani Hist. S. Imag. ii. c. 39.

§ Dacher. Spicil. iii. 405.

|| Chron. Halberst.

¶ Muratori Not. in Leo Ost. Chron. Mon. Cass. Script. Rer. H. iv.

** Lib. i. c. 33.

> "Nulla ferunt nobis statuæ discrimina, nullos
> Fert pictura dolos ; jam sunt innoxia signa ;
> Sunt modo virtutum testes, monimentaque laudum,
> Marmora et æternæ decora immortalia famæ *."

True, as Cardinal Palæotus says, in regard to every subject, care must be taken lest any one should abuse good things ; but it is the abuse itself, the accessary, and whatever can deprave them, which is taken away by Catholicism with a saving of the good,—Salva et integra rerum substantia manente †.

Catholicism indeed exercises an attraction upon this road, when men discover that it is the Church which protects the Christian world from the error allied by its extravagance to the old madness, which is combated by the decrees of her early councils, saying, "Qui sacras imagines Idola vocant, Anathema : qui ex Scriptura sententias contra Idola dictas in sanctas imagines torquent, Anathema : qui dicere audent Sanctam Catholicam Ecclesiam Idola umquam accepisse, Anathema ‡."

Pictures in the churches, therefore, preserved and respected, point to the wisdom and discretion of the Catholic religion, which accepts their service, and consecrates them to the end of human salvation. The prayer from ancient times in the benediction of pictures placed in churches was expressed in these words :—"Almighty, eternal God, who dost not forbid that the images or effigies of thy saints should be carved or painted, that as often as we behold them with corporeal eyes we may meditate with the eyes of memory on their acts and sanctity, in order to imitate them, we beseech thee that this picture or image, in honour and memory of the blessed saint it represents, may be productive of these effects, through Jesus Christ our Lord §." Instances are not wanting of the fulfilment of such prayers. "A Dominican friar," says Cardinal Palæotus, "in whom one might have perfect confidence, related to me that when he was at Milan, he knew a certain nobleman who deliberated about killing an enemy ; but on entering a church and seeing a picture of our Lord upon the cross he was struck with a sudden perturbation of mind, and casting himself at the feet of the image, he renounced his wicked intention ; and effects of the same kind," adds the Cardinal, "we believe have been experienced by many others ‖."

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* De Sacris Diebus Mens. Jan.

† De Sac. Imag. lib. i. c. 33

‡ Concil. Nicæn. ii. act. 2. Syn. 7. act. 4 et 5, in fin. et act. 7.

§ Ap. Palæot. de Imag. Sac. i. 28.

‖ Id. lib. i. c. 26.

Instances, deemed miraculous, that at all events argue the profound impression which the Christian duties excited in human breasts are related by diverse authors. St. Peter Damian mentions that a certain man slew another more great in the world than himself, by whose son, after the way of the world and not of the gospel, his life was threatened. It happened soon after, that the murderer, accompanied by four or five men, met the son of the murdered man, who had an attendance of thirty armed men ; the murderer besought his companions to fly, and he then came forward, laid down his weapons, and extending his arms in the form of a cross, prostrated himself and implored pardon. The other, moved by reverence of the cross, forbad any one to strike his enemy, and then, through veneration for the holy cross, granted him not only life, but forgiveness. He then proceeded whither he was going, to the imperial court, and soon after, entering a church, the image of our Saviour on the cross seemed to incline its head thrice, as if to salute him. When the emperor heard of his action, he received him with benignity, and presented him with great gifts." Another example, occurring in the Magnum Speculum, is thus related :—" A German noble meeting a plebeian in the field, whom he was pursuing for having slain his brother, being implored to pardon him for the sake of Christ, who had pardoned the world, burst into tears at the memory, and sheathing his sword already drawn, forgave him. The same day, when going to hear mass, as he bowed down before the crucifix in passing by it, the image was thought, by a holy man there present, to bend its head towards him. He, all astonished, took the knight aside, and questioned him as to his life, who assured him that he deserved no favour from Heaven, unless, perhaps, for the act of that morning, which he related to him. Then the holy man exhorted him to lead thenceforth a life of grace *." We find yet another instance in the same work. John Pecham, disciple of St. Bonaventura, falsely accused in the chapter at Bologna, kneeling down before the crucifix implored our Lord to deliver him from the calumnies of men, when a voice seemed to issue from the cross, uttering these words, which used to be read before that image which even we in England might do well to read.

> " Et ego quid demerui pendens inter latrones ?
> Oravi, nec obtinui carnis petitionem,
> Calicem mortis sorbui, Patri placere studui, per carnis passiones.
> Ergo non murmur exeat, si non sit quod orasti ; nec orasse pœniteat, quamvis non impetrasti.
> Dum fraudat desiderium, ad majus beneficium datorem obligasti.

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* Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, 238.

Ad me si levas oculum, vides argento vendi, tradi quoque per osculum, et dure comprehendi, ac alligari funibus; contici verberibus: veluti desperatus præsentor Pontificibus quasi latro ligatus.
Sic quos amavi fortius, ab his inquam citius sum spretus et ligatus.
Ibi clamor, derisio, severitas minarum,
Omnes impune faciunt, et quidquid mihi faciunt, videtur esse parum.
Saturatus opprobriis ducor ad Pilatum,
Renovatis injuriis, ruunt in accusatum,
Hinc homicidam liberant, ad mortem adjudicatum.
Ibi nil valet veritas, sive jus allegando:
Sed æmula clamositas prævalet insultando,
Nec præses dat præsidia, nec curam gerit curia, de justo liberando.
Quasi vile mancipium, dant in Herodis manus,
Mox producor in medium, deludor ut insanus.
Tandem remissus Pontio, diræ mortis supplicio condemnor ut prophanus.
Extra muros rejicior, et ipse crucem fero,
Matre vidente spolior vestimentis, quæ gero.
Tandem clavis confodior, et in cruce morior, de vita non despero.
Tu ergo vermis non turberis, si statim non consequeris quicquid à Patre quæris *."

This is a forgotten history. Still celebrated, however, is that monument, analogous and truly venerable, the black ebony crucifix of which we read in the revelations of St. Bridget, to be seen in the Basilica of St. Paul at Rome, where it was preserved from the last fire. But enough of such mystic records. Already I see the bitter note of grim suspicion which is kindled in some rigid countenances by this brief mention of them. Well, let them, for the moment, be set down as fables, to calm a little the gentlemen of English reviews, who must be told, however, that the narrators, as well as the humble persons who are reported to have seen such things, would, like St. Francis, have expressed their sense of their own worthlessness by comparing themselves to such images, saying with him, "As in pictures of our Lord and of the blessed Virgin on wood, we honour our Lord and his blessed Mother, and yet count as nothing the wood or picture, so the servant of God is to be considered; for man is the picture of God, in which God is honoured for his graces, while the recipient, like the wood or canvass, is simply nothing, and therefore to God alone is all the honour paid †." Leaving them, therefore, without excuse for their mistrust, they

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* Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, p. 559.
† Bucchius, Liber Conformitatum, 48.

must, in return for our giving up the legend, acquiesce in an assertion which will cost them no great pains to admit; for one thing, at all events, is quite certain, and I ask now their assent to nothing else,—that holy images are not likely to be seen by many critics in our age, who have forgiven an enemy from their hearts for the sake of the mystery which they represent to the veneration of the human race. Such an action belongs to an order of deeds of which no sect, however learned, smacks; and sects and adamantine writers, practising no supernatural virtues, are perfectly right in not expecting to witness the miraculous graces which they scorn. It is easy to accuse, and thanks to the suspicious turn of mind created by Protestantism, to indulge in imputations against others, though even of a crime long since impossible; but a question of real importance, for men so inclined to address to themselves, standing here, as they do, with us, within the House of God, is instantly suggested by the very records which they disdain; for can they look up to this picture, to this image, to this crucifix, with the same conscience as the men whom they are so quick to pity or condemn? Could they hope to hear such words either in this world or in the next? Have they, like them, forgiven their personal and bitter foes through reverence for Christ? Have they studied the life of the friend of God, to imitate his manners? Have they meditated on their knees, like them, on all the circumstances of the sufferings and passion of the Redeemer? Leaving them, however, to follow or not such reflections, let us pass on, and observe what next the walls of churches offer to our view.

The seven sages of Greece, coming to Delphi, consecrated to Apòllo their celebrated maxims, which were thenceforth inscribed in the court before the temple[*]. I hope no one will infer from this that Catholic Churches were paganized because we find inscribed in them sentences from the holy Scriptures and from the Fathers. Such, however, we do find in them. Suso caused to be painted elegantly in his chapel the sacred name of Jesus. Amidst holy sentences, in order to provoke the hearts of all to the love of God, and in order to encourage them to bear their crosses, he made to be painted a certain tree, bearing the roses of affliction, and also another tree, indicating the differences of temporal and divine love, with Latin sentences, which his spiritual daughter translated into German verses[†]. In the church of St. Anne in the Willows, in London, were these lines on an old stone—

" Qu an Tris di c vul stra
os guis ti ro um nere uit
h san Chris mi T mu la ;"

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[*] Pausan. lib. x.

[†] H. Susonis Epist. xi.

which disjointed syllables form the couplet,

"Quos anguis tristi diro cum vulnere stravit,
Hos sanguis Christi miro tum munere lavit."

In the cathedral of Amiens, on the wood carving, we remark these words, which with solemn and singular precision point to the Catholic Church—

"Misericordia, veritas, justitia, Pax."

The presence of former saints, as having imparted interest to certain churches, is sometimes recorded in lines which call attention to the historical and mystic glories of Catholicism. Thus, in the old church of Mont Serrat was a pillar, near which St. Ignatius passed a whole night in prayer, in memory of which these lines were inscribed on it—"B. Ignatius de Loyola hic multa prece fletuque Deo, se, virginique devovit. Hic tamquam armis spiritualibus, sacro se muniens pernoctavit *." Even the commemorations inscribed of ancient foundations are not without a similar signification. Thus, in the church of St. Mary Colechurch, in London, an inscription attested that Henry IV. had granted license to William Marshal and others, to found a brotherhood of St. Catherin therein, because St. Thomas à Becket and St. Edmond the Archbishop were baptized there. Indeed, generally, the font could direct men from the vague surmises of modern sects respecting Calvary and Baptism to the doctrine of Christian antiquity, in regard to the blood and water from the side of Christ, which proclaims that if the blood of the Redeemer be the ransom of humanity, the water is the means established to make the application of it to each individual. Again, researches among the tombs in churches, and a taste for mortuary inscriptions, can direct men to the faith which they often proclaim with such impressive eloquence.

"You tell me, Seigneur," writes Don Antonio de Guevara to a certain noble, "that you think that I, as a man diligent and curious, having often passed with the emperor into Italy, and traversed Spain in all directions, must have seen and taken note of some epitaphs and sepulchres which deserve to be recorded. It is true, I have remarked many that were interesting. When I was with the emperor at Cajetta, I found a very old tomb, on which I read these words—

'Sylvius Paladius,
Ut moriens viveret,
Vixit ut moriturus.'

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* Dom Montegut, Hist. de N. D. du Mt. Ser. 28.

In the convent of the Minerva, at Rome, whither I went to hear the office of Holy-Week, I read, on a sepulchre,

'O mors, O mors, O mors,
Irumnarum Portus,
Et meta salutis.'

Being guardian of a province, and going to a general chapter with two Portuguese friars of my order, one of them perceiving that I was fond of hearing of ancient things, said, that in his convent there was a tomb of a Portuguese Fidalgo, which stated that he died unwillingly—contra sa voluntade,—as if the good friars deemed that a singularity to be commemorated *." Stowe made many rambles of this kind among the London churches. On the tomb of the poet Gower, buried in St. Mary Overie, on the wall where he lieth, there was painted three virgins crowned; one of the which was named Charity, holding this device—

" En toy qui es Fitz de dieu le pere,
Sauve soit, que gist souz cest piere."

The second writing, Mercy, with this device—

" O bone Jesu, fait ta mercie,
Al alme, dont le corps gist icy."

The third writing, Pity, with this device—

" Pur ta pité Jesu regarde,
Et met cest alme en sauve garde."

The acrostic epitaph of Amia, the wife of John Wiatt, in the abbey of Tewkesbury, was as follows—

" A me disce mori, mors est sors omnibus una;
Mortis et esca fui, mortis et esca fores:
In terram ex terra terrestris massa meabis,
Et capiet cineres urna parata cinis.
Vivere vis cœlo, terrenam temnite vitam;
Vita piis mors est; mors mihi vita pia.
Jejunes, vigiles, ores, credasque potenti,
Ardua fac; non est mollis ad astra via.
Te Scriptura vocat, te sermo, Ecclesia Mater;
Teque vocat Sponsus, Spiritus, atque Pater."

The sepulchre of the good Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, in the abbey of St. Alban's, was discovered in the last century. At the foot of the coffin was painted, on the wall, the Crucifixion, with a chalice at each hand, at the side, and at the feet, to

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* Epist. lib. i.

receive the blood from the Saviour's wounds, with a hand extending from the dust, holding this scroll, " Blessed Lorde, have mercye on mee *." In such a vault, heresy denying that the Church teaches the Christian doctrine on salvation, would preach to deaf ears. The Emperor Rodulph, proceeding to Spires, said, " I must haste to the sepulchres, to meet other kings." It is well to meet in this manner the men of former times, who have so much to communicate that can guide us right ; for Catholicism is mixed up with all the ancient grandeur of the human race ; and all memorials point to it. Protestantism naturally made light of such directions. Stowe complains bitterly of the havoc that it wrought, effacing the epitaphs and other inscriptions in churches. Thus, at St. Leonard Saerditch, " of late," he says, " one vicar there, for covetousness of the brass, which he converted into coined silver, plucking up many plates fixed on the graves, left no memory of such as had been buried under them,—a great injury both to the living and the dead, forbidden by public proclamation, in the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, but not forborne by many, that either of a preposterous zeal, or of a greedy mind, spare not to satisfy themselves by so wicked a means."

But passing on from tombs, as time now permits not tarrying, let us observe other objects in churches of a significative character. The reverence for our Lord's burial, and for the great mystery involved in it, appears in many churches in which his holy sepulchre is monumentally represented. St. Conrad, bishop of Constance, in 967, went for the third time to Palestine, through reverence for the footsteps of Christ, experiencing incredible labour and perils, and showing wonderful devotion to the passion of our Lord, which he had studied with intense emotion from a boy. The next year, on his return, in order to supply the people of Constance with a memorial of our Lord's Passion, he constructed a model of the holy sepulchre, in the midst of the Basilica of St. Maurice †. In 1401, Udalricus of Ulm, a man of the equestrian order, constructed a work of stone of vast magnitude, in the middle area of the cathedral court, representing the Mount of Olives, in the form of rocks worn by time, and of overhanging crags, with an elegant chapel of cut stone, under the mountain ‡. Monuments of this kind, that can be found in the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Abbeville, in that of St. Roch in Paris, and in several others, can thus recal the profound piety of the Catholic spirit in regard to our Lord's sepulture, of which we find such affecting instances in history. " A certain soldier," says an ancient writer, " having visited

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* Beattie, The Castles and Abbeys of England, 92.

† Gabriel Bucclini Chronologia Constantiensis.

‡ Id.

with tears all the holy places in Palestine, coming to the Mount of Olives, whence our Lord ascended, expired on the spot through joy and devotion, saying, Behold, O Lord, I know not whither I can seek thee more! Whither beyond this spot can I proceed? Grant that I may see thee in thy glory[*]." If time permitted, we should find, also, clear directions in the ancient, obscure, ex voto offerings which are suspended on the walls of so many churches. These representations of ships in danger of being overwhelmed by the waves—of limbs restored to soundness, these crutches suspended, these wax images of boys, like that which the Lady Christiana Germaule of Essex placed upon the tomb, when she had offered the supplications to which she ascribed her son's recovery, point to the efficacy of prayers within the House of God. The great chain suspended over the tomb in the church of the village of Nobeliacus, had been originally placed in the outward wall of the tower of Limoges, being that to which the Viscount of Limoges used to attach the unhappy victims of his tyranny, till a poor man was delivered from it by St. Leonard, whom he had invoked in his distress[†]. Such objects, more than the bird red-breast, which a modern poet likes to see in churches, may be truly deemed "meet for the place, nor calculated to spoil the prayer even of the gazing boy[‡]." As we advance towards the choir, the great mystery of the Catholic faith is presented before us in a solemn image of our Lord's Passion. Lactantius indicates that the crucifix used to be placed in the middle of the Church, as these verses attest—

"Quisquis ades, mediique subis in limina templi,
Siste parum ; insontemque tuo pro crimine passum,
Respice me, me conde animo, me in pectore serva ;"

and St. Ambrose says, that the cross stood in the church as the mast in a ship, to which men may cling in the wreck of the world[§]. It was before such an image that St. Gertrude, every Friday, used to study and meditate on our Lord's passion[||]. It is before such an image that every one more especially reflected, as Pope Innocent III. says, "Quam profundum est crucis mysterium, quam arduum est sacramentum[¶]!" The prior of a certain convent saw, in a vision, a convert brother after his death, and wondering to hear from him that he was with God, without having passed through purgatory, heard this reason

[*] Joan. Major, Magnum Speculum, 45.
[†] D'Averoult Catéchisme Historial, vol. i. 139.
[‡] Lyra Inn.
[§] Serm. lv.
[||] Insin. Div. Piet. S. Gert. iii.
[¶] De Sac. Alt. Myst. ii. 43.

assigned—"I had the custom, whenever I passed before the crucifix, to say, O Lord, my God, by the bitterness of thy passion on the cross suffered for me, have pity on my soul at my death. The Lord heard my prayer, and has had mercy on my soul *." With a view to obtaining these results, every new cross is the subject of a solemn benediction, the prayer being as follows :—"Da, quæsumus, clementissime Pater, in quo vivimus, movemus, et sumus, ut quoties triumphum divinæ humilitatis, quæ superbiam nostri hostis dejecit, oculis intuemur, quotiesque mente recolimus, et contra hostem ipsum fiduciam fortitudinis. et majorem tibi devotæ humilitatis gratiam consequamur;" and then are added these words—"May this wood be sanctified in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and may the blessing of that wood, on which the holy members of the Saviour were suspended, be in this wood, that all who pray and bow down, on account of God, before this cross, may find health of body and soul by our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen †." Though hitherto we have only passed along the nave, the absence of objects that could recal the order of ideas which prevails in the world is itself not a little remarkable; for it seems to imply that we behold an accomplishment, in some sort, of the prayers once so solemnly offered under this roof, when the consecrating pontiff cried, "Let the envy of the ancient serpent be extinguished here, and let the turmoil of the devil, with all his frauds, be driven forth—efferat secum maculam quam ingessit, and the seeds of his work to perish in eternal fire; nihil hic in posterum noceat præteriti culpa contagii, nihil sit quod remaneat inimici, fraude pollutum, quandoquidem spiritus tui est infusione purgatum. Resurgat Ecclesiæ tuæ pura simplicitas, et candor innocentiæ hactenus maculatus." When violent men, like some of late in England, presumed to introduce the envy of the serpent and the turmoil of the devil, with all his frauds, into churches, the imperial laws were less tender than the sentence of modern magistrates—"Si quis," said they, "divinis mysteriis vel aliis sanctis mysteriis celebrandis in sancta intraverit Ecclesia, et Episcopo vel clericis vel aliis ministris Ecclesiæ injuriam fecerit, jubemus eum tormentis subjectum in exilio mori ‡." If any one disturb a holy oratory, or a procession of the Litany, at which a bishop or priest should assist, the penalty is death; for we not only wish that all places dedicated to God should be free from all incursion, but much more, that bishops and clerks should be safe from all danger; so that if any judge, or prefect, or military officer, should dare to lay hands on them, or insult them, in no manner that crime can be expiated unless by eternal exile or by

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* Ant. d'Averoult, Catéchisme Historial, i. 62.

† Pont. Rom.

‡ Novel. 123, c. 31.

blood *. The Church, however, is not responsible for such enactments, which do not concern us here. I shall only observe, that the councils were very strict in requiring what might express and aid impressions as to the sanctity of the place. "Excepting in the event of fire and of hostile invasion," says the Council of Lateran, under Innocent III., "the churches must be kept free from all things of a secular nature." Clement V., at the general council of Vienne, prohibited even the trunks in churches to receive offerings, that all collection of money might be taken away. Cardinal Palæotus says, that the coat-arms of families ought not to be represented in churches. "Men," he says, "who have not studied theology, should know that those who place their arms in churches, and on vestments and things which they give to God, incur danger of losing all the merit of their action †. What more absurd," he exclaims, "if instead of the images of the cross we should find in churches the signs of Guelfs or Gibelins, which can inflame minds with the desire of revenge, and banish just thoughts ‡!" He would exclude also all figures of military arms §. "It is absurd and intolerable," he adds, "to hear a preacher recommending the pardon of injuries, while we see on all sides the Pagan morality developed in painting, to enter the Church to implore peace and humility from God, and to see on all sides warlike symbols and representations of triumphs, like those of the ancient Romans ‖. When soldiers entered a church, they were obliged to lay their bows and arrows, swords and javelins, on the steps outside. Nothing was neglected to impress the mind with a sense of the purity of the place; so that a bishop, on his visitation, was to inspect the churches, and see even whether doves or other birds built their nests there so as to disturb it ¶."

But now proceeding further, the shrines and relics, and the sacred altars are near in view, which all can lead men, as it were, step by step, to recognize the principles which establish the divine truth of the Catholic religion. What do the shrines recal?—The saints and the old apostolic veneration for their memory. These were the places, as Thomassin says, which appeared to have been chosen for the display of divine judgment upon the impious; such were the tomb of St. Felix, martyr at Nola, in the time of St. Augustin, the tomb of the martyrs, Gervais and Prolais, at Milan, that of St. Peter at Rome, that of the martyr St. Apollinarius at Ravenna, in the time of St. Gregory the Great, and that of St. Eloy at Noyon. To these

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* Ap. Hincmari Rhem. Epist.

† De Imag. Sac. lib. ii. c. 48.

‡ Id.

§ Id. lib. v. c. 6.

‖ Id. lib. ii. c. 13.

¶ Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Dis. lib. i. 21.

places men went to invoke God by oaths, "Ubi terribiliora opera Dei non sanam cujusque conscientiam multo facilius aperirent, et ad confessionem vel pœna, vel timore compellerent *." It was in consideration of the terrible judgment that visibly befel those who invoked God falsely over the tombs of the martyrs, that King Robert, who so loved truth from his heart, as Hilgad testifies, substituted the egg of a bird for the relics of a martyr in the shrine on which oaths were taken †, following thus the dictate of reverence, which is never unblessed, rather than that of knowledge, which is compatible with reprobation. The relics in churches point at truth by reason of the antiquity of their usage; and also in consideration of the wisdom which adopts and consecrates a custom that has a natural attraction to the human mind. During the ten first centuries the bodies of saints were left either in the tomb or under the altar. In France, the custom of taking them and placing them in portable shrines began about the tenth century, on occasion of the invasions of the barbarians, when it was necessary to remove them from place to place; and these courses were so frequent, that at length it became the custom to leave them in these shrines exposed to the veneration of the people. The tomb of St. Geneviève, so celebrated for the miracles wrought at it, retained however its treasure to the revolution ‡. Till the end of the twelfth century each bishop, in his own diocese, "raised from the earth —levait de terre," and placed in a shrine, the relics of a person offered to public veneration; but as it became necessary, in process of time, to use more precautions, Alexander III. reserved to the holy see the canonization of saints. The least object that had any connexion with the friends of God, had, from the first ages, been venerated by Christians; St. Gregory of Tours supplies an instance, relating that a Lombard deacon, named Wlfalaicus, scraped a little dust from the tomb of St. Martin, which he inclosed in a reliquary, and placed it in a church. The history of the transmission of many relics is often remarkable, as that of the bodies of the Magi, associated with many great historical facts, which, after long reposing in the Eustorgian Basilica of Milan, were removed to Cologne by Rudolph the archbishop, when Milan was destroyed by Frederic Barbarossa §. The history of relics begins in the sacred Scriptures, as the poet recognizes when he asks—

> "What wonder, if the bones of Israel's saint,
> Though not as yet with Christ incorporate,

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[*] S. August. Epist. 137.

[†] Du Chesne, t. iv. p. 66.

[‡] Hist. de ce qui est arrivé au tombeau de S. Gen.

[§] Collius, II. ii. 1.

Such power obtain'd, that Christian bones dispel
Satanic energies, and add a sacred awe
To temples * ?"

"Ossa, cinisque jacent, memori quos mente requiris †."

"Christ is in his saints; the virtue emanates from Godhead made man, to confer blessings on the whole world." "Si tetigero tantum vestimentum ejus, salva ero," said the woman in the Gospel. Such is the sentiment which draws Catholics to these shrines; they seek to touch the hem of our Lord's garment, or to traverse the shadow of his friends. Calvin, fearing that the example recorded in the Gospel might prove the justice of revering relics, affirmed that it was superstition in the woman who touched our Saviour's robe; but our Lord regarded it as an act of faith. The shallow objections of the plunderers of churches scarcely deserve notice here. What are the facts of the case, both as to the conduct of mankind and the tendencies of the human heart? "Is it not," asks an able writer, "so plain a fact, that it were absurd to prove it, that none but the most hardened souls are insensible to the influences of the remains of the departed great and good? Is it not true that the tendency of relic-worship is so intensely powerful in human nature, that men, who have no legitimate innocent or Christian object on which to fix these peculiar feelings, will attach themselves to things abhorrent to every refined mind ‡." Silence as to most of these Protestant analogies is most becoming here; but we can refer to Homer, and remark how the herdsman of Ulysses weeps when he sees his dear master's bow §. We can cite Antony, as Shakspeare gives him utterance, saying, that the Roman people should dip their napkins in the blood of Cæsar, yea, beg a hair of him for memory, and dying, mention it within their wills, bequeathing it as a rich legacy unto their issue: or we can point at such objects, prized by men of the worldly philosophy, as can be mentioned without shame —such as the arm-chair of Gustavus Vasa, purchased by his admirers for 58,000 florins; the coat of Nelson, for 150 pounds; the coat of Charles XII., worn at the battle of Pultowa, for 22,000 pounds, at Edinburgh in 1825; the tooth of Newton, which was bought by an English peer in 1816, for 730 pounds; the cane of Voltaire, which was sold for 500 francs; the vest of Rousseau, which cost 959 francs; the wig of Sterne, for which 200 guineas was paid in 1822; and, in fine, Napoleon's hat, worn at Eylau, which was purchased for 1920 francs by a physician. Monsieur Delaunaye relates, that enormous sums were repeatedly offered by Englishmen for a single tooth of Heloisa, after the remains had been removed to the museum of

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* Morris.

† Met. vii. 13.

‡ Lucas.

§ xxi. 83.

French monuments in the year 1800. The mental movement implied in such acquisitions might naturally lead men to admit the same principles of conduct when applied to the purposes of religion; and, as an English writer justly observes, "We should rejoice to see any symptoms of a hearty, loving, unselfish reverence, for any thing that is not connected with rank and riches, since those who vilified and destroyed Catholic relics and who defended such acts, have hitherto been only worshippers of coronets and well-filled purses." The principle therefore is recognized even by those who have no relics of saints to venerate, for the reason that they know no saints; the only difference being, "that in the one case the devout soul venerates all that has been connected with those who have been high in the favour of God, while in the other, the mind worships the remains of those who stand high in the favour of man *." As for another objection, that false may be mistaken for true relics, Cæsar of Heisterbach, alluding to it, asks, "Is there sin in that case when men venerate them? In my opinion," he replies, "ignorance excuses the fault, and even merits grace; and we know as a fact, that it has pleased God to work miracles by such relics, honouring the intention of those who believed in their authenticity †." Prudential decrees, I am aware, might be alleged; but, in general, the objection is only a fresh instance of the shallowness of the adversaries, and a striking example of the pure philosophy of the worshippers of relics, who can make all distinctions that circumstances may demand. "For," says St. Bruno, "what are the relics of the saints which are placed in altars? I understand their doctrines and words to be the relics of the saints. We can therefore have the relics, not alone of the saints, but of our Saviour himself, in the altar of our heart. Blessed are the altars in which such relics are placed—blessed the hearts which receive such treasures ‡!" Instinctively the wicked, in great emergencies, seek safety by connexion with the good; and much more, amidst the perils of life, to the relics of the saints can be drawn those who know, from having conversed with living saints, how dear and precious to God must have been on earth the spirits which once animated these bones. Indeed, in the benediction of the reliquary, the prayer of the Church authorizes such hopes; for the words are these, "And as thy saints, by thy inspiration, not only despised but wholly overcame all the arts of spiritual wickedness, so we pray that to those venerating their merits, and humbly embracing their relics contained within these shrines, thy right hand may be ever extended at the prayers of the same saints, protecting them against the devil and his angels,

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* Lucas. † Illust. Mir. et Hist. lib. viii. 69.

‡ S. Brunonis de Laudibus Eccles. lit.

against thunder and tempest, against hail and pestilence, against corruption of air and death of men and animals, against thieves and robbers, against hostile invasions, against evil beasts and all kinds of serpents and reptiles,—et contra malorum hominum adinventiones pessimas *." O how should men in our age be attracted to the Church, which provides a mystic remedy against these worst inventions of evil men !

Again, the jewels and precious metals of the churches excited the cupidity of plunderers in the sixteenth century, as they continue to disturb patriots in our own ; but the same treasure, which in its natural use Pliny calls "præcipuam morum insaniam," exercises a moral attraction of a very different origin upon the minds of wise and good men, who detect the spiritual idea that leads to such an application of wealth and beauty, and who behold in it the fulfilment of a divine intention announced in the sacred Scriptures. During the middle ages a certain symbolic instruction was supplied by precious stones, which rendered them in a peculiar manner suitable to churches. This is explained by Hugo of St. Victor in a passage which may be thus cited, "quia nos obliterata quoque scrutabimur ;" as a Roman author says, "nec deterrebit quarundam rerum humilitas." "The jasper, which is green, signifies," he says, "those who never wither, but always flourish in the grace of God. The sapphire, which is blue, signifies those who, being still on earth, reflect heaven, and have their thoughts and desires there. The chalcites does not shine in the house, but shines only when brought into the air, and this signifies those who conceal their good works, and seek not to be seen by men ; but when ordered by superiors to go forth, then the beauty of their lives appears. The emeralds, which are greener than all green things, found in the uninhabitable cold of Scythian deserts, where griffins guard them from all but the one-eyed Arimaspi, who fight against these and win them, and from these Arimaspi we obtain the gems—these signify the perfect in faith and holiness, who are watched by demons, unwilling that men should profit by them, while they are resisted by those who have but one eye and one heart, and one Lord, and who triumph over them. The sardonyx, with its three colours of yellow, black, and white, signifies those who suffer persecution for Christ with a candid mind, while seeming sinners in their own eyes. The sardus, all red, signifies the martyrs. The crysolith, all golden and emitting sparks, signifies those who, understanding the Divine Scripture by their actions, as if with sparks illumine others. The beryl, pale green, like water struck by the sun's ray, and said to warm by its touch, signifies men illumined by divine grace, who, with the fire of divine

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* Pontificale Rom. de Benedict. Capsarum.

love, inflame those who converse with them. The topaz is the rarest and most precious of all stones, of two colours, the one like gold, the other like the serenest sky, and when any one seeks to polish it, the lustre is obscured. This kings love above all gems. This signifies those who, purged from all earthly cupidity and defilements, shine like pure gold and the brightness of heaven; and they who have this virtue are more prized than all; and when kings wish to adorn them still more with the dignities of the world, they make them cheaper and of less merit. The chrysoprasus is purple with golden drops, and signifies those who spend their lives in tribulation and labour, and at length crown it by martyrdom. The jacynth changes its colour with that of the sky; if the sky is bright, it shines,—if dark, it is dark: this signifies those who so conduct themselves, that with the wise they are wise, with the perfect perfect, and then, descending to the weak imperfect become like them, as did Paul. The amethyst is the colour of a rose, seeming to emit flames, and signifies those who, amidst the torments of passion sustained for God, have the fire of charity, which makes them pray for their persecutors, and grieve more for their sins than for the pain they inflict, and this is well placed as the twelfth and last, for this is the highest perfection of virtue *." Such was the language of these symbolic treasures that are now presented to our view in churches, which consequently never lost their value in Catholic ages, as when gems ceased to please Mecænas, who once loved them, when Horace died, to whom he says—

"Lugens te, mea vita, nec Smaragdos,
Beryllos quoque, Flacce, nec nitentes,
Nec præcandida Margarita quæro."

Faith, as we behold here, had found for them an unfailing purpose; but let us briefly notice them, as set here, for the adornment of holy things. Ventura Pontanus, of Perugia, coming to Constance in 1459, described in a letter to a friend in Italy the splendour and riches of that church. "I know not," he says, "whether in any other place such sumptuous reliquaries can be found, or so many vessels of silver and golden tables, and sacred images exquisitely wrought, and covered, with a multitude of amethysts, diamonds, beryls, and emeralds. We were filled with astonishment †!" The crown alone on the image of the blessed Virgin, composed of purest gold, and set with precious stones, was of immense value ‡. When the Lutherans pillaged Constance, the sacred treasure of the cathedral was

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* De Bestiis, &c. lib. iii. c. 58.

† Ap. Gab. Bucelin Constantia Rhenana.

‡ Id.

estimated at more than a hundred thousand florins*. Sidonius Apollinaris observes, that the church of St. Martin, at Tours, may be well said to contend with the temple of Solomon, which was the seventh wonder of the world :—

"Nam gemmis, auro, argento si splenduit illud,
Istud transgreditur cuncta metalla fide †."

We have an interesting description of the interior magnificence of an English Church, in a poem of St. Aldhelm, who says,—

"Hæc domus interius resplendet luce serena,
Quam sol per vitreas illustrat forte fenestras,
Limpida quadrato diffundens lumina templo.
Plurima basilicæ sunt ornamenta recentis,
Aurea contortis flavescunt pallia filis,
Quæ sunt altaris sacri velamina pulcra.
Aureus atque calix gemmis fulgescit opertus,
Ut cœlum rutilat stellis ardentibus aptum,
Sic lata argento constat fabricata patena,
Quæ divina gerunt nostræ medicamina vitæ,
Corpore nam Christi sacroque cruore nutrimur.
Hic crucis ex auro splendescit lamina fulvo,
Argentique simul gemmis ornata metalla.
Hic quoque thuribulum capitellis undique cinctum,
Pendet de summo, fumosa foramina pandens,
De quibus ambrosiam spirabunt thura Sabæa,
Quando sacerdotes missas offerre jubentur ‡."

In the church of Mont Serrat, which was built between the years 806 and 825, when Louis-le-débonnaire had driven out the Saracens, the riches were incalculable. Four great golden crowns, studded with diamonds of immense price, were on the image of our Lady. Dom Montegut describes the remonstrances studded with diamonds and pearls, the chalices lined with rubies, a chapel of amber, a chapel of crystal, the golden candlesticks, and a silver throne for the image, of the value of 13,000 piastres, given by the Duke of Cardonna. All who visited this church, he says, not content with adoring our Lord, imitated the Magi also in offering him their treasures. Love cannot remain idle without showing itself in a thousand ways. When a man loves God, he strips himself, to make a sacrifice of whatever he has best to God. Hence it is that such treasures were accumulated in Mont Serrat §. Hence Drexelius, to prove the devo-

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* Id. Chronolog. Constant.
† Epist. lib. iv. 18.
‡ S. Aldhelmi de Basilica edificata, &c. Poem.
§ Hist. de N. D. du Mont-Serrat, 58.

tion of the Archduchess Mary of Austria, to the Mother of God, cites the gifts which she sent to her sanctuaries at Œtinga, in Bavaria, at Cella Mariana, in Styria, at Loretto, in Italy, at Mont Serrat in Spain, and at Chastocovia, in Poland *. The rich-chased crucifix studded with ancient jewels in the cathedral of Santiago, at Compostella, is said to be one of the oldest pieces of Christian plate existing, having been made about the year 894. It bears these words inscribed—Hoc signo vincitur inimicus, hoc signo tuetur pius.

But without waiting longer to survey details which might be supposed infinite, all pointing to the same divine love, let us advance now softly towards the sanctuary. Lo, the lamp itself, and these symbolic lights can direct us right;—for they are fed by holy love, and they have a profound signification. Blessed Maurice, the Hungarian, sprung from the kings of Hungary, used to beg oil from door to door, lest the lamp before the blessed sacrament should ever cease to burn †. The Church has borrowed the use of lights in the worship of God from the Old Testament ‡. Those which are processionally borne have besides a curious historical descent; for lights having been always borne before Patriarchs and Emperors, as when Sigismond, on entering Paris, was preceded by men carrying two hundred wax lights, the lampadarius being an officer for this purpose at the imperial court, the Church employed what she found to be the highest mark of honour, and transferred it to the divine worship in order to signify the supreme majesty of God §.

But, lo! we stand before the altar where "the Son of God on earth remains, though now in heaven; as Son of man he was in heaven even when on earth." Here all things direct us to the great mystery of faith; and as a recent voice observes,—

"Ill fare the people, who the glorious sight
Which at the altar by the Spirit to us
God hath reveal'd, believe not ‖!"

Alas! truly, it is ill with them. The Moors, they say, "have much more just notions of Christ than those who believe him to be bread." Well, but do you mark what they add? "Or a helpless infant." See then how trembles the soil, or rather how it fearfully yawns beneath your feet, if you quit the rock in any direction to exchange faith with such observers for the letter of the Bible!

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* Rosæ Select. Virt. P. i. c. 12.

† Leonard Fossæus de Rosario, lib. i. 4.

‡ La Tradition de l'Eglise sur les Benedictions, 109.

§ Id. 119.

‖ Morris.

Few there can be who are insensible to the impression produced by the spectacle of this altar. "O Holy of holies," exclaims St. Thomas of Villanova, alluding to the ancient temple, "What a difference between these and ours! O that royal Psalmist who so venerated the shadow, how would he worship the reality!—he who so humbled himself before the wood, how would he bow down to the Christ! He who so played before the ark, how would he exult before that true and tremendous majesty of God *!" "Christ," says Pope Innocent III. "when about to ascend to his Father, having promised his Apostles to be with them to the end of the world, wished to remain with them, not alone by inhabiting grace, nor alone by divine essence, but also by corporal presence. Christ according to the divine nature exists in three manners in things—locally in heaven, personally in the Word, sacramentally on the altar †."

"Magister," said the disciple, "ubi habitas?" He said to them, "Venite et videte." They came and saw ‡. How many are similarly drawn to this tabernacle!—Quid quæris naturam in Christi corpore, asks Pope Innocent III., cum præter naturam sit ipse natus de Virgine? Christ is one in divers places, as in divers places whole §. The words—Me autem non semper habebitis, are no more opposed to the real presence in the eucharist than to the promise—Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem seculi ||. We have Christ with us, under the species of the divine sacrament, and not always in the form of his person ¶.

"Our Lord left us this last memorial, as a man going on a long journey leaves to one whom he loves some token of affection, that as often as the other looks at it, he may remember his friendship; since if he truly loves him, he will not be able to behold it without weeping or desire. So did our Saviour institute this sacrament **." "There are," continues Pope Innocent, "three things in this sacrament—the form of bread and wine, the truth of flesh and blood, and the virtue of unity and charity, as seen with the eye, believed in the mind, and felt in the heart ††." It is the mystery of faith. Some think it only a figure, which snare of error they incur, because they neither receive with reverence the sacraments of God, nor properly understand the authorities of Scripture, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. What! because a figure, is it not also truth? Then the death of Christ is not a truth, because it was

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* In die S. Corp. Christi, c. 111.

† De Sacro Altaris Myst. lib. iv. 44.

‡ S. Joan. ii. 1.

§ iv. 27.

|| Mat. xxvi.

¶ iv. c. 36.

** iv. c. 43.

†† iv. c. 36.

a figure; nor the resurrection of Christ a truth, because it was a figure—for they were an example that we should die to sin and rise to justice *.

We must not delay here to admire the material splendour of that altar, decked by such loving hands, for it is some holy religious saint who, like Dom Luc d'Achery, while sick in the infirmary, makes the flowers and wreathes that are spread over it, nor the solemn austere character of the sanctuary, which by the canons no woman could enter †, or, as St. Isidore of Damietta shows, serve at, in the place of singers, whatever part of the Church might be chosen for them; nor the impressive majesty of the forms that encompass it, for then we should never finish. The tabernacle on the altar of the Escurial is described by the older writers as "a specimen of the altar ornaments of heaven." There, round that altar, are placed effigies of ancient princes, who kneel in solemn pomp before the King of kings. But there is one consideration suggested by the place, surpassing every other, which will rivet us for some moments to the spot, in deep irresistible emotion, reflecting on that awful, symbolic, and prophetic silence, which reigns for ever here! The eternal Word keeps silence. It is the Abbot Gueric who remarks this in trembling ‡. There was the silence of Christ in the womb of his blessed Mother, the silence of Christ upon the cross, and here is the silence of Christ in the eucharist, as profound as that in the bosom of his Father. "O how awful," cries the Capuchin Friar Boulanger, in his Treatise on the Ten Solitudes, "is this silence of the Son of God in the blessed sacrament! No voice has ever sounded from the holy tabernacle. There, under the sacramental elements, the eternal Word dwells in silence till the end of the world!" But see the living figures kneeling, prostrate, supplicating in every posture of humble adoration; see the arms extended in form of a cross, see the tears, the smiting of the breast, the inimitable inconceivable expression of hearts impressed with a sense of the real presence. Stranger, alien from faith, did you mark that? If men are ever to behold suppliants praying to Almighty God, it is to a Catholic Church they must come to find them. Some pray with joined palms, to show the help which they expect from God alone, that posture being a recognition of weakness, and an expression of trust; others with arms open, to show their disposition to receive him whom they invoke, to unfold their hearts and to embrace the divine goodness. It is Guillaume du Vair, First President of the Parliament of Provence, who makes this remark. Some, retired

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* iv. c. 35.

† Regino Ab. Prum. de Eccles. Dis. i. 101.

‡ Abb. Guer. Ser. 3. de Adv.

apart, are intent upon a holy page. Thus in an old mystery an empress says to her attendant,—

"De mes heures vueil le surplus,
Dire que je n'ay mie dit.
Ysabel, tost sanz contredit,
M'amie, mes heures prenez,
Et avec moy vous en venez,
Jusqu'au moustier."

And then coming to the Church she says,—

"Ho ! puisque devant l'autel suis,
Sanz empeschement de nullui.
Sà, mes heures ! miex me voult tendre,
A les dire que plus attendre,
Puisque j'ay lieu."

In these old representations of manners there is repeated mention of the books of hours that ladies take with them to the moustier *, and we may remark, that down to the fourteenth century, the Latin language in consequence was familiar even to women †. Others, on the contrary, reject such aid, and find that without it they can better pray. We read in the book De Septem Donis, that a certain pious matron used always to pray devoutly in a corner of a certain cathedral, moistening the pavement with her tears. The bishop, who was a man of holy life, is said to have remarked a dove collecting those tears ; and he called her aside, and asked what she used to pray ; and she replied, that she said Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo. " How happy then you would be," replied the bishop, " if you knew the Psalter !" which when she had learned and began to repeat, the bishop no longer saw the tears or the dove, so taking away the Psalter from her, she resumed her former prayers ; and then the bishop had proof that the ancient devotion of the heart and its effects returned ‡. These tears could not have been uncommon in England when St. Aldhelm composed his poem on the altars of blessed Mary and the twelve Apostles, for he alludes to them thus—

" Audi clementer populorum vota precantum,
Marcida qui riguis humectant imbribus ora,
Ac genibus tundunt curvato poplite terram,
Dum veniam fuso lacrymarum fonte merentur,
Et crebris precibus delent peccamina vitæ."

Before the despisers of churches rise from their beds, these

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* Un Miracle de N. D. et de Clovis.

† Le Roux de Lincy, les femmes célèb. de l'ancienne France.

‡ Joan. Majoris Magnum Speculum, 200.

altars are surrounded with a multitude of all ages and conditions, praying thus; recalling those early assemblies before light on Sundays, at which the martyrs of the primitive Church were so assiduous *. From St. Ambrose, indeed, we learn that it was the custom to repair to the churches every day at the first dawn †. Some will get the start even of these early worshippers. So in the mediæval mystery of Amis and Amille, a daughter asks leave to go out to hear mass "before the crowd should be great in the moustier." Thus it continues still. Now suddenly, to use Dantean words, I seem

> "By an ecstatic vision wrapt away,
> And in a temple see, methinks, a crowd
> Of many persons; and o'er the altar stands
> A dame in sculpture, sweetly seeming to express
> A mother's love."———

When the middle hours of each day occupy the pious elsewhere in their various labours, and invite the idlers, after a luxurious meal, to saunter forth, this holy crowd has long dispersed; but still there are two or three remaining at their prayers; and to a scornful question some consecrated persons to reply—

> "What if the world our two or three despise,
> They in his name are here,
> To whom in suppliant guise
> Of old the blind and lame drew near.
> Beside his royal courts they wait,
> And ask his healing hand; we dare not close the gate ‡."

At Munich, Mabillon found it to be the custom, whenever the blessed sacrament was exposed, for the curate to go from door to door to invite each family to assist, in order, in the Church, so that there should be distinct classes in succession, as at one time the men, another the married women, another the youths, another the young women, another the men-servants, another the maid-servants §. But at all times some are here with minds exercising and bodies expressing faith, hope, and charity, while men separated from the Catholic communion walk to and fro, and at intervals, as if by stealth, look on and wonder. One of these, now no longer alien from the fold, while yet a wanderer expressed his feelings thus—"Sunday abroad is really an unhappy restless day; and one almost rejoices when it is past. The very bells of Genoa seemed to sound reproachfully in our ears. There are churches enough to enter"—but "it is an evil thing to gaze and peep while others around you are kneeling

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* Baron. ann. 303.
† Serm. 34.
‡ Lyra Inn.
§ Mab. Iter Germanicum, 84.

and believing." Again, "The longer we remained in the cathedral of Milan, the more its glory struck us. It is an oppressive thing to be a priest," he means one of the ministers, "in the city of St. Ambrose and St. Charles Borromeo, and yet a stranger, a gazer, a mere English looker-on, a tourist, where one should be upon one's knees at home, and in that divine temple a legitimate worshipper. It is distressing, truly, to be in a wonderful church, like this of Milan, to feel sure that you reverence the memory of St. Ambrose, and have deep affection for the very name of Borromeo, and are not without Christian thought for Saints Gervasius and Protasius, as much as one half of the people you see there, and yet be shut out from all church offices, and to have no home at the altar." It is not, however, that such men can find no others but themselves in Catholic churches who are evidently strangers in the fold; for no longer is the discipline observed to which the Roman pontifical alludes when ordaining the door-keepers, in the words—"Certisque horis domum Dei aperiatis fidelibus, et semper claudatis infidelibus*." Infidels, at least in manners, enter at all times freely with the rest, whose demeanour, however, to observers well advised, can be as significative and useful as that of the devout suppliants. "It is a trite proverb," says Cardinal Palæotus, "that there can be no church in which the demon will not have his chapel, as there can be no sermon unless he has a place reserved for him to assist at it†." Father Andreas Pinto Ramirez mentions it as a remarkable instance of the reverence entertained for Marina de Escobar, that during her obsequies and the funeral sermons, amidst the prodigious multitude in the church, not one of the younger nobility was observed to utter a word, though sometimes, even when the blessed sacrament was exposed, men and women might be sometimes observed in conversation‡. Let us hear some old writers, speaking of those who enter churches with irreverence. Cæsar of Heisterbach supplies an instance. "Last year," says he, "Scutetus, of the next town to us, called Wintere, related to me, that a short time before, a certain religious man and pilgrim had been in our church, standing at mass, and that near him stood some delicate matrons, wives of knights, talking idly, so as to prevent him from praying. When mass was finished, he took some of the knights aside, and said, 'You, my lords, came to church for the sake of prayer, and lo, at the devil's instigation, there was such a noise and whispering round me from these matrons that I could not pray. I will tell you an anecdote, to show the criminality of such conduct;' upon which he related the punishment which

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* De Ord. Ostiariorum.

† De Imag. Sac. lib. ii. c. 48.

‡ Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, p. ii. lib. iii. c. 2.

appeared to have been inflicted on a noble lady for such irreverence *." The Magnum Speculum contains another example. "Three maidens," says the author, "made a pilgrimage to a certain church. The brother who said mass, wrapt in ecstasy, beheld an angel descending with a crown of red roses, and placing it on one of them, another angel descended with a crown of white roses and placed it on the second, while a demon, enveloped the third with a fur tippet, and danced before her. After mass he asked them what had been their thoughts during mass. The first said, she had meditated on the crowning of our Lord with thorns; the second, that she had thought of the boyhood innocence of our Lord; and the third avowed that she had been thinking how slow the brother was in saying mass, wishing it over, that she might buy a new tippet and hasten to a dance †." If the simplicity of such details displease you, we can find instances sufficiently stately that resemble what can be observed almost daily in our age. Thus, De Jonghe relates that Charles Stuart, king of England, an exile, entered the royal chapel in the church of the Dominican convent in Brussels, with the Prince de Condé and some other great men, who all began to talk together in presence of the blessed sacrament, which was then exposed to the adoration of the faithful. Father Ambrose Druwé, observing them, approached and respectfully admonished, not only the Catholic prince, but the Protestant king himself, and they received his admonition in good part ‡. But there are other strangers, now, who enter churches in order even to publish their impressions to the credulous nations, which are alternately their deceivers and their dupes. "The cathedral of St. James at Compostella," says one of these, "is a majestic venerable pile, in every respect calculated to excite awe and admiration; indeed, it is almost impossible to walk its long dusky aisles, and hear the solemn music and the noble chanting, and inhale the incense of the mighty censers which are at times swung so high as to smite the vaulted roof, whilst gigantic tapers glitter here and there amongst the gloom, from the shrine of many a saint, before which the worshippers are kneeling, breathing forth their prayers for help, love, and mercy, and entertain a doubt that we are treading the floor of a house where God delighteth to dwell. Yet the Lord is distant from that house; He hears not, He sees not, or, if He do, it is with anger." Such are the observers admirably formed by nature for the best things that Protestantism sends forth from England in these days, constraining us, at least here for once, to meet them.

But now, leaving such men to pursue their walk, let us re-

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* lib. iv. 22. † 579.

‡ De Jonghe Belgium Dòminicanum, 99.

mark the intimate connexion between the Catholic religion and this devout demeanour of the faithful worshipping, which can often move even those who enter with other thoughts, as in an instance which occurred this year in the church of a convent in St. Germain, where the mere sight of a fallen minister of state bowed down reverentially at his prayers, caused the conversion of an aged sinner—"Domus mea domus orationis vocabitur." These divine words are received by the Catholic Church as designed for fulfilment here. Therefore, in the office of consecrating a church, she prays that here may be heard by God the prayers of all invoking Him, that the blessed and holy Trinity, which purifieth all things, and adorneth all things, that the blessed Majesty of God, which filleth all things, containeth all things, and disposeth all things, that the blessed and holy hand of God which sanctifieth all things, blesseth all things, and enricheth all things, might purify and bless and consecrate, by a perpetual outflowing of his sanctification, that house; that here priests might ever offer to Him the sacrifice of praise, and here the faithful people pay their vows; that here the burden of sinners might be loosed, and the falls of the faithful repaired; that here the sick might be healed, the lepers cleansed, the blind enlightened, the demons expelled, and all invocations granted through our Lord Jesus Christ *. The heretics heeding little the example of St. John the Evangelist, have often urged the inutility of prayer in churches; but St. Chrysostom applies himself to show the error of such neglect. A tendency to their opinion, which could be detected even among the faithful in his time, becomes the subject of his most earnest and vehement reprehension. He complains on one occasion, that multitudes used to fill the Church when he preached, whereas, at mass, when our Lord Himself was present, the Church was deserted. "O shame! for Christian men," he exclaims, "how can they hope for pardon? The Church is a place of prayer, not a hall for hearing lectures †." Prayer, according to the Catholic religion, includes the twofold action which is observable in the suppliants we see before its altars; for we may be said almost to see what passes in their minds, so impossible is it to separate the interior thought from the corporeal expression which accompanies it. "Our desires," says Pope St. Gregory, "are of more avail with the secret ears of God than our voices. If we seek eternal life with our lips, without desiring it from our heart, we are silent while we vociferate. But if we desire it from our heart, even though our tongue be silent, without speaking we cry out ‡." "Remark," says St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, "that

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* De Eccles. Consec.

† Ap. Stapleton Prompt. 176.

‡ S. Gregory Mag. Moral. in Job. lib. xxxi. 18.

the holy Job does not allude to his oral prayers, but to his desire—desiderium meum Omnipotens audiat; for true demand is not in the voice of the lips, but in the thoughts of the heart. It is not our words, but our desires, which reach the ears of God *." Charles, the good Count of Flanders, used to pray in the Church like many of the poor at present, so that those who stood near could hear what he said †. The lips, too, of these suppliants, move rapidly; but they have all been taught that the thoughts must not remain below, while words fly up. "Magna abusio est," says St. Bonaventura, "habere os in choro et cor in foro ‡." "What folly," cries St. Cyprian, "to think of profane things when you are praying to God! What else ought you to think of then but that you are speaking to Him? How can you ask to be heard by God when you do not hear yourself?" The rule of the hermits of St. Romuald contains similar words—"Infructuosa est oratio quæ labiis tantum profertur corde longè averso §." What the Catholic religion insists on being repeated oftenest, is still essentially an interior act of the intelligence and affections combined; for the "Our Father," as Thomassin remarks, "is a mental prayer, and as such it takes its place after the reading of the sacred lessons and the chant of Psalms ||." But the Catholic religion requires also a corresponding expression, by means of which the body itself both worships and proclaims the worship of its invisible companion. St. Thomas explains why prayer becomes a part of satisfaction, saying, "For the beginning and root of sin is pride; and therefore, when a man humbly submits his spirit to God in prayer, he cuts off the root from which the pride of his former sin took rise, which made St. Jerome say,—Oratione sanantur pestes mentis; but a humility confined to the mind could not be genuine, therefore external reverence is required in prayer." "Exomologesis prosternendi et humilificandi hominis disciplina est," said Tertullian ¶; and St. Hilary calls the posture of a prostrate penitent, habitum prophetalem—a prognostic of eternal joy **. Antonio de Escobar, remarking the ineffable efficacy of the prayers of St. Peter of Alcantara, observes the exterior reverence with which prayers should be offered. St. Cæsarius of Arles observes, that it is written in the Gospel of our Lord, that falling on the earth He prayed; and he asks, Why did He pray so? To which question Paschasius Ratbert supplies an answer, saying, "Quia nec crux

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* S. Odonis Abb. Clun. Mor. in Job. lib. xxii.

† Fr. Gualter Tarvanens. Vita S. Caroli Mart. c. xxv.

‡ Reg. Novit.

§ Constitutio Er. Ord. Camaldulensis, c. 19.

|| De l'Office Divin. 21.

¶ De Pœn. 9.

** La Tradit. de l'Eglise sur les Bénédictions, 138.

aut calix passionis sine invocatione Domini, nec invocatio Dei sine cruce quæ tollenda est ad salutem, aliquid valet *." The exterior posture has so strong a tendency to produce the interior act, that Philip, abbot of Otterburg, a prudent and learned man, says Cæsarius, used to give this advice to persons who related it to me, "When you are tempted, bow down profoundly in due places, and the demon will fly from you. Due places are altars, and wherever crucifixes or holy relics are exposed †." Flesh and blood experienced a thrill of such profound emotion on seeing the humble prostrations of the fervent suppliants, that the imagination was ready to suggest that the very stones sometimes could proclaim the power of such prayer. Richard II. thought once that he saw the crucifix bow its head, as a strange knight prayed for mercy from God with great fervour in a church in Normandy. The king was so struck, that afterwards calling him aside, and finding that he had been banished from England by an offence against the forest laws, he granted him grace in consequence, and leave to return to his country; "for which act," says Matthieu Paris, "I believe that the king will be the sooner delivered from the pains of purgatory and the perils of damnation ‡." Attention to the least things contrary to exterior decorum characterizes the ecclesiastical discipline. St. Ambrose used to exhort the people to abstain from coughing, and from all disquietude during the time of the canon; and in a very ancient rule we find forbidden in a chapter "de reverentia orationis," many habits, which to men at least, like Mark Antony, who never spat, can prove offensive. "Non frequens tussis, non exscreatus assiduus, non anhelitus abundet §."

The visible equality of rich and poor in Catholic churches must not be overlooked here. The poor are not ranged at the portals where the public penitents used to be placed, for whom, however, at certain seasons, it was the custom to move the pulpit near the door, in order that they should hear the preacher. The altars near the portals, as at Noyon, were for the penitents, not for the poor. In the ancient Pontifical of Châlons-sur-Saône, we read, "In some churches the priest can celebrate mass at a certain altar near the doors for the penitents who are standing before the doors of the church ‖." Catholic antiquity has but one voice on this subject, which the humour of the modern innovators, and the kindred spirit of the world, have so strong a tendency to contradict in practice. St. Augustin broadly affirms, "They who say to the rich, Sede

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* Lib. viii. in Mat. ap. Escob. in Evang. tom. vii. 254.

† Illust. Mir. et Hist. lib. iv. c. 90.

‡ Ad ann. 1232.

§ Regula Magistri xlviii. ap. Luc. Holst. Codex Reg.

‖ Ap. Lorain. hist. de l'Abbaye de Cluny, 66.

hic, and to the poor, Tu sta illic, are transgressors of the Christian law. Lest this precept," he continues, "should seem a light thing, these words are added, Quicunque totam legem servaverit, offendat autem in uno, factus est omnium reus; not that all sins are equal, but that the plenitude of the law being charity, he who sins against that sins against all *." And the same father, writing to Proba, adds a precept which most beautifully expresses the Catholic mind, in regard to the only prayer which God will ever accept from the rich and great. "Though you may be most rich," he says, "pray as if you were one of the poor; for you have not yet the true riches of the future life, where you will have no loss to fear,—Et licet sis ditissima, sicut pauper ora †." O how such words might pierce the hearts of some men now, if they were made of penetrable stuff! What will some, drest in a little brief authority, think of those rich of the Catholic Church, in former times, praying with and like the poor—of those rich coming even to the church with and like the poor? Like St. Elizabeth, as Rutebeuf describes her, repairing to mass, so poorly and humbly through the mire of the road, without horse or chariot, holding her lighted taper! "The Lord sometimes vehemently impelled me," says Marina de Escobar, "to reprove the faults which others committed against the divine majesty; and if I ever omitted it through the consideration of my being a poor woman, I felt obliged to return through a mighty scruple. It happened once that, being in a church, a certain noble lady entered, who, wishing to sit in a place occupied by a poor woman, ordered her angrily to yield it up, beginning, at the same time, to rebuke her maids for not driving her away instantly; for she was choleric by nature and had an inveterate habit. Then the Lord said to me, Rise up, and accost that lady, and tell her that she remembers not the nothing from which she is made, and admonish her to be humble. I heard the divine voice, and I was troubled, finding myself ordered to perform what was alien to my natural inclination and unsuitable to my vile estate; but so efficacious and determined was the injunction, that I could not avoid obeying it. Therefore I rose up, and approaching the lady, said to her, with as loving and sweet a tone as I could find, the words with which the Lord inspired me; and she received them with a great humility of mind, embracing me, and returning me immense thanks for having showed her such charity, and beseeching me, not permitting me to escape from her hands, that I would commend her to God, and also her son who was sick, and that I would tell her who I was and where I lived. I replied, that I was nothing, and that

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* S. Aug. Epist. xxix. ad Hieron.

† S. August. Epist. cxxi.

it was for me to implore her grace; thus was I consoled, observing how souls could be inflamed through such a miserable instrument with the divine love*." The most ancient notice of any reserved benches in churches is said to be of the date of 1577, when some were appropriated to parishioners in the church of St. André-des-Ars in Paris †.

But now a solemn sound pervades the whole edifice, issuing from its aerial towers, yielding a great sign, the force of which all men, whatever they pretend, can feel. Plutarch ascribes the Parthian custom of sounding brazen instruments, and of making a loud noise, like thunder before a battle, to their having observed that hearing is of all the senses that which most easily moves the soul and the passions, and transports man out of himself ‡. The Church turned to a better account this observation, and therefore, excepting during the commemoration of the passion, when the bells of churches, as Rupertus observes, are silent, to indicate that silence and flight of the disciples after the betrayal of our Lord §, a most solemn murmur, consecrated and symbolical, floats at intervals above the fold; for, as a poet sings,

> "The bell sighs ever in the sombre cupola,
> Inviting and expressing prayer,
> Sleepless as the waves upon the ocean,
> Or as the winds through the wide expanse of air."

In the cathedral of Reims the music of the bells continues night and day. Before the clock strikes each hour and each quarter of an hour, a chime sends through the atmosphere a sweet and sacred cry of the familiar Litany. At the first quarter it sings Peccatores; at the third, after the interval of half an hour, it resumes the prayer commenced, and cries, Te rogamus, audi nos; at the half hour, between these two cries of the heart, it says, In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum. This order is every day throughout the year invariable; but the voice at the hour varies with the festival, and repeats an entire strophe of the hymn, or prose, of the solemnity. During Advent it sings, Rorate cœli desuper; at Easter, O filii et filiæ; at Pentecost, Veni Creator spiritus; at Corpus Christi, Lauda Sion. Such are the singularities presented by this music of the bells at Reims. But now, returning to what is universal, the solemn sound at present, let us suppose, is that which is to announce the commencement of the divine office; and indeed in these first notes of preparation, there is much to direct us well, recalling, as they do, the words used by the Catholic Church at the benediction of the bell, when the pontiff prayed that it might be sanctified, adding, "Et

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, lib. i. c. 24.

† Le Ménagier de Paris, note ^{2}.

‡ In Vit. Crassi.

§ De Div. Officiis, lib. v. c. 29.

cum melodia illius auribus insonuerit populorum crescat in eis devotio fidei,—ut quicunque ad sonitum ejus convenerint, ab omnibus inimici tentationibus liberi, semper fidei Catholicæ documenta sectentur*." At this sound, remember now that the whole country round, as far as it can reach, may often, in some sense, become to men of faith a church, so that woods and desert plains behold some solitary worshippers, like those whom we see kneeling or prostrate here. An instance is thus related in the Magnum Speculum, "The great solemnity of the Assumption was at hand, and the brethren of the granges of Clairvaux were hastening to the abbey; but in one of these granges was a certain lay brother, devout and fearing God, who, though unable through simplicity to learn any of the higher things of religion, was especially dear to the blessed Virgin. When the master of the grange selected those who were to go, and those who were to remain, this brother was ordered to stay there in charge of the sheep. He had much desired to hear the divine hymns of that festival, but he durst not contradict his superior. However, it happened that his holy devotion, which he feared to lose by the distractions of his earthly occupation, was only kindled to much more fervency; so that, on the night of the solemnity, as he kept watch over the flocks, hearing the sound of the bells which called the brethren to the church to matins, which in the stillness of night could reach his ear at that great distance, his heart became dilated and kindled at the thought of the holy multitude singing the divine praises and at the fervour of each soul secretly as he joined in them. So, rising up, he turned towards that part of the heavens over the monastery, and then said the accustomed prayers as well as he could, which merely consisted in repeating the angelic salutation of the blessed Virgin. With these abbreviated words, concentrating all the piety of his heart, he spent in pious rapture the remainder of the night. His reception of highest grace was at the same hour made known miraculously to St. Bernard, who said to his community, Be assured that there is one of the simplest of our poor lay brethren, whom obedience has detained in the woods on the mountains in the open air, to whose intense devotion no sublimity of the contemplation of any amongst us present in the church can be preferred. At which words all the brethren were filled with joy and admiration, hearing such proof that no necessary affairs accomplished through obedience, can be an obstacle to the raising of pure hands in prayer to the Almighty †."

But now, confining our attention to what takes place within the Church, we may remark that the chants, whatever musical science may pretend, possess a power on the heart which few

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* Pont. Rom. de Bened. Campanæ.

† Ex lib. de viris illust. ord. Cisterc. ap. id. 533.

can overcome. "Who does not feel," asks a recent author, "on hearing them, that they come from the night of past ages, rich in ideas which are no longer of our frivolous domain*?" Loud and rapid swells the alternate chorus, full of all that the unfathomed Psalms contain: then slowly there is heard "the music of a breath-suspending song;" for the Church accepts the definition of music by Plato, who calls it "the art which, regulating the voice, passes into the soul, and inspires it with the love of virtue†."

"In 1837, at All Saints, I was present in the cathedral of Reims," says a French author‡, "after the vespers of the festival, at the vigils of the dead, funereal eve of the morrow's solemnity. It was eight o'clock; the chant was near the end; they sung the Libera, which is like the farewell of the dead to the living, and the last prayer to survivors of those who are no more. A violent storm made the glass of the windows rattle. The wind shook the whole edifice, and the rain sounded like hail against the panes. The great bell sounded louder tnan the wind and rain, and its broken tones resembled the howl of a storm over a forest. Within the church these sounds of nature mingled with the bell seemed multiplied by the echoes of the building: the tapers, all but two, were extinguished. Here and there some black figures, mourning for their friends and relatives, moved through the gloom. Suddenly the blast seemed to increase in fury, and the bell to sound quicker; it was the moment when the chanters, arrived at the words—Intendente animæ meæ, had raised their voices to a louder tone. At that instant, a woman near me, a stranger, who had stood all through the office, dropt upon her knees and cried aloud, 'Oh! my God, oh, my children!' I heard afterwards that this was an unhappy creature who had abandoned her husband and her children in Paris, to follow her seducer to Reims. The tempest probably was for something in this shock which she sustained; but the plain chant, the bell, the austere voices of the choir, and the whole Church had shaken this withered soul; had bruised, bent, and uprooted the desolating and immoral power of which she was the slave. Perhaps from that moment she was emancipated and for ever."

"It is without reason," says Thomassin, "that some inveigh against the melodious chant of the Church. St. Basil, of all men in the world, has been the least indulgent in regard to the pleasures of sense, and he does not object to this, and it is really too much pretension to think of surpassing him in severity §."

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* Etudes sur les idées, &c. au sein du Cath. i. 155.

† De Legibus, lib. ii.

‡ M. Didron.

§ Thomass. de l'Off. Divin. et de sa liaison avec l'orais. ment. 1, Part. c. 24, et c'est trop prétendre de vouloir l'enchérir sur luy en sévérité.

"Felices hominum illi censebuntur in orbe
Qui laudare Dei supremi numen amabunt *."

So sung the sibyl, or those who represented her; and the Catholic Church verifies the prediction, or continues to fulfil the history. "Perfectius est Deum laudare," says St. Stephen of Grandmont, "quam rogare; for if any one lived rightly and always loved God, it would be never necessary for him to pray, but always to give thanks †." "The clergy," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "are expressly deputed to give solemn thanks and praises to God for all his benefits, and to represent secular men who have not time to apply wholly to the divine worship ‡;" and yet never in the Catholic Church are wanting multitudes of secular men familiar with the divine offices, who join in the religious song. Many at the present day in France, in every rank, could change places with the clergy, and discharge their functions in the choir, as laymen are recorded to have sometimes done. An old author, describing the vast crowds present at the consecration of the new church at Bec, by Lanfranc, and the loud psalmody, as every one joined in the holy chant with vociferous jubilation, adds, "graves ejusdem monasterii personæ quæ propter nimiam aliorum multitudinem paucæ aderant, solis lacrymis et devotione cordis solemnitatem explebant §."

Even with the singularities of the divine office observed in certain religious orders, we find that secular men are often found evincing familiarity, of which a French antiquarian gives this curious instance,—"The Prince de Condé, in 1642, besieging Salses, a Carmelite friar was brought to him as suspected of being a spy. This prince, being learned in such things, in order to discover whether he was really a friar, asked him how they began vespers on Easter-day in the Carmelite order? And when he replied it was with the Kyrie eleison, the prince ordered him to be set free, and he took occasion to tell the officers present, that it was well to study the customs of the religious orders through respect for the divine service ||."

"The psalm," says St. Ephrem, "is the peace of the soul. It dispels nocturnal fear. The psalm dwells in the desert, tempers the assembly, instructs the rude, and furthers the advanced; it is the firmament of the perfect, and the voice of the Church ¶." Such is the office that we behold discharging here, "of grace divine inwoven, and high song of inexpressive joy;" as St.

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* Sibyll. Orac. Collius de Anim. pag. iv.

† S. Steph. Grandem. Liber Sententiarum, c. 106.

‡ S. Thom. a Vill. 207, in die Nat. Dom. Con. iii.

§ Crispin. Vita Abb. Beccensium.

|| De la Roque, Traité de l'Origin des Noms, 301.

¶ Encomium in Psalmos.

Bernard says of the hymn Salve Regina, composed by Hermannus Contractus, "à sanctis compositum, à sanctis institutum, dignè frequentabitur etiam à sanctis;" adding, "Et verè nisi a religiosis et affectione sancta ferventibus nec subtiliter intelligi, nec efficaciter poterit decantari!" which observation explains why some strangers describe the ceremonies of the Church, even in the holy week, as being "of the most tedious and wearisome kind;" for such is the consummate art of the Catholic Church, that men would find intolerable the association of her ideas, and even of her melodies, with the thoughts and expressions of the world that is systematically opposed to her; so perfectly does she succeed in disappointing what St. Ephrem styles, "the diabolic cunning of those who to-day would join in Psalmody to God, and to-morrow in choruses to the devil,—to-day Christian, to-morrow Pagans,—to-day servants of Christ, and to-morrow apostates from God; for no man can serve two masters *."

St. Augustin says, "Qui diligit canticum Psalmorum assiduum non potest amare peccatum;" and conversely they who love the deeds condemned by God, after being a few moments in the church, will be seen instinctively, one by one, to seek the door. But for others, whose hearts are not quite seared, and, above all, for the pure, the attraction of this whole ritual, symphonious with the planetary spheres, will prove great indeed, and commensurate with the object of its institution. "I do not wonder," says a recent author, who then belonged only to the class of the susceptible, "that you should envy the Latin service-books; for any thing more elevating and magnificent than the western ritual is not to be conceived. It gives to men the tongues of angels, and it catches glorious shreds of echo from the eternal worship of the Lamb. It has a language of its own, a language of symbols, more luminous, more mystical, more widely spread, than any other language on the earth. I do not wonder you should envy the Latin ritual †." The very parts which some supercilious critics would amend, have a charm to attract both the poor and men of real genius; for, as the Bollandists say of two hymns in honour of St. Agatha, in the Spanish liturgy,—"rudes illos quidem, sed antiqua ac grata simplicitate gratiosos ‡."

Another author, who only wrote under the impressions of the same school, says, "That it was a sweet thought which moved great Gregory to teach the Church to speak again one tongue, and that he wonders why that should now seem no longer possible §." The wisdom of the thought is sufficiently intelligible: the vulgar tongues change and perish quickly. In the chronicle of Nitard.

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* Encom. in Psalmos. † Faber.

‡ Faustinus Arevalus, Hymnodia Hispanica, 107.

§ Morris.

grandson of Charlemagne, we find the treaty of peace, made at Strasbourg, between the Emperor Louis of Germany, and Charles-le-Chauve, his brother—the one in the German, the other in the French then spoken; and "yet there is not, at the present day," says an ancient writer, "a German or a Frenchman who can interpret either *."

That the Latin tongue must have been dear and familiar to innumerable multitudes in consequence of its employment by the Church in her offices, may be inferred from considerations of which we find mention in a beautiful letter addressed to Henry, Count of Troyes, by Philip, Abbot of Goodhope. "Although the Hebrew and the Greek," he says, "are transmitted in that order from ancient times by the Fathers, yet as they came down to us not by use, but by fame alone, our mind, bidding them farewell, applies itself to the Latin tongue with all its energies; and unless we are hardened and reprobate, a love for it follows the understanding it. For every one ought affectionately to revere that language by which he hears the true God more expressly proclaimed to him, by which our redemption, the resurrection of all, and the glorification of the saints are more solemnly made known; and to conclude briefly, by which the knowledge of God and of the things that are God's shines forth to those reading and not neglecting †."

Uniformity of rites, moreover, no less than that of language, proclaims the truth of the Catholic Church, and the wisdom of its ordinations; for however man may wish to apologize for some modern examples that militate against it, never can it be absurd, as Dom Guéranger observes, "to see, with Charlemagne, St. Gregory VII., and the Council of Trent, one of the fundamental principles of the social unity of the west in the unity of the Roman liturgy. And of what use would it be to preserve the Latin tongue in the divine offices as guarantee of the immortality of doctrine, if the sacred formulas preserved in that tongue be not also placed out of the reach of the vicissitudes of time and place?" Hear what says the illustrious Antoine d'Hauteverre, Professor of Law in the Faculty of Toulouse, in his Vindiciæ Ecclesiasticæ Jurisdictionis ‡. "He brings nothing new who only follows the rites of the Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all the Churches. He invents nothing new, but he restores ancient and better things, taking away the wrinkles and the stains of the Church, who assimilates himself and his Church to the Roman order, removing the diver-

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* Sebast. Roillard de Melun. Advocat en Parlement, Le Grand Aulmosnier de France, 23.

† Epist. xv. ap. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. Script. tom. xvi.

‡ Lib. ii. c. 22.

sity of rites." Such is the sentence of this author, proving thus how far were the ancient magistrates of France from regarding the use of the Roman office as a servitude for the churches *.

But to return to the employment of the Latin tongue. Dante compares the impressions that he felt in Paradise to those of a simple suppliant who joins in the Church's song on earth with fervent but unlettered men, adding,—

——" Yet I mark'd it was a hymn
Of lofty praises; for there came to me
'Arise' and 'Conquer,' as to one who hears
And comprehends not †."——

In vain do some pretend that here is no food to attract, by satisfying the natural thirst of human souls. From their plain vulgar readings, the ignorant themselves recoil to seek the assemblies of the Catholic Church, where facts, more eloquent than words, demonstrate that the spirit of prayer and piety is nourished by the Latin song. Indeed, as the venerable Olier says, "at the bare consideration of the principle of all true worship, the objection of the heretics to the Latin office vanishes; for the soul," he says, "when about to pray, has nothing to do but to unite itself to Jesus Christ, in communion with the whole Church; which is far better than if it prayed from itself, with its own spirit, seeking to adore, praise, and supplicate God by itself, and by its own act. The former is the kind of prayer used in heaven, where the saints only respond Amen to the prayers of the Lamb ‡." But we need not remain longer to insist on the attraction of these offices, combining one harmonious soul of many a soul, which has been so frequently acknowledged by men alien from the fold. While still in that condition an eloquent voice was heard lately to exclaim, "Oh! what a blessing it would be if we could enter a church and kneel among its worshippers! There is a spell in sacred music which unbinds the soul and calms it. The blessings of unity meet you here at every turn; and this in the assemblies of the separated you cannot have."

But we must now listen, with suspended breath, to some who will speak briefly of that sacred mystery, for the celebration of which, especially, churches themselves were originally constructed, and with trembling reverential step approach with them the divine altar. Here every thing directs the stranger who feels the want of guidance on the spiritual way that good and evil men must tread. For, at the first, the mere position of the priest,

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* Défense des Institutions Liturgiques.

† Par. iii.

‡ Apoc. vii. 12. Olier, Catéchisme de la Vie intérieure, P. ii. c. xi.

so far from being the thing indifferent that our revolutionary king imagined it, in reality proclaims the true religion. Plutarch remarks, that all previous orators, speaking to the people, turned towards the senate, but that Caius Gracchus turned himself in an opposite direction, and looked towards the public square, and by this apparently slight change of situation and posture produced a very great effect, rendering thereby democratic the government which had been before aristocratic. The ministers of error turn their faces to the people, as if to the highest court of appeal, when addressing Almighty God. The priest of the Catholic Church faces the altar while interceding for and with the people, and only turns towards them to salute them through divine charity, which he does seven times during the sacrifice, to signify, as Pope Innocent III. says, "his prayer that they may acquire the septiform grace, to the exclusion of the seven sins *." The difference of position indicates thus the different sources from which the priest and the minister derive their mission. Moreover, this turning from the people, to be alone, as it were, face to face with God, is significative of a whole order of ideas and results, to which the adversaries of faith are strangers; for they will be unable to conceive why, for instance, St. Ignatius of Loyola was obliged to allow a day to intervene between his offering of the holy mysteries, which necessity arose from the force of the impressions produced upon him each time that he said mass †. John of Alvernia, one day saying mass, was so wrapt in a divine and ineffable sense of God, that he doubted whether he ought to proceed, lest he should be obliged to desist in the midst of the sacrifice. After the preface of the blessed Virgin, the illumination and sweetness so increased, that coming to the Pridie quam pateretur, he could hardly endure it longer. At the words of consecration, the guardians perceiving his inability to proceed, hastened to his assistance, and stood near him, all the persons in the church observing what passed, and weeping. Having pronounced the words, he fell back into the arms of the guardians, who, with other brethern hastening, carried him as if lifeless into the sacristy, for his body was cold as a corpse, and his fingers so stiff and contracted that they could not be opened; and so he lay till Tierce, when, recovering, he replied to them that he had felt at the altar so weak that he could not make the sign of the cross upon the Host ‡.

Between what the moderns term reading prayers and the Catholic sacrifice, it is clear then that the difference is partly

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* De Sac. Alt. Myst. lib. ii. 23.

† Le P. Bartoli Hist. de St. Ig. liv. ii.

‡ Joan. Maj. Mag. Speculum, 139.

indicated by the mere position of the minister and of the priest, the one looking towards the people, courting publicity by a studied delivery of the words, the other turned from them, mystically insensible to their observation, and sometimes even wholly lost as to personal consciousness in the divinity of the act which he is discharging.

Besides this contrast of position, the vestments of the Catholic priest strike the beholder, and carry back his mind to the early days of Christianity, when symbolic instruction entered into the views which determined every detail of religious manners. "That linen which," as Pope Innocent III. says, "by dint of strokes acquires the whiteness which it has not from nature, to signify that the flesh of man, macerated by many castigations, obtains by grace the purity which it obtains not from nature; that stole, signifying wisdom or patience; those wide dalmatics, which signify the breadth of generosity and hospitality; that broad chasuble, signifying the wideness of that charity which is extended to enemies; those gloves of the bishop, to signify, Ut nesciat sinistra sua, quid faciat dextra sua; that mitre, signifying by its two points the science of both testaments; those four purple crosses, worn by the pontiff, to signify the four virtues of policy—justice, fortitude, prudence, and temperance, which, unless purpled by the blood of Christ, in vain usurp the name of virtue, and lead not to the true glory of beatitude*"—all these point to the deep unobtrusive wisdom of primitive times, not less attractive for having excited the ridicule of men, like the Arian Milton, who designates the sacred vestments, as "deformed and fantastic dresses, gewgaws fetched from Aaron's old wardrobe, or the flamins' vestry;" in which suggestion he errs not wholly. "For," as Cardinal Palæotus says, "the vestments, on which were writings to recal to mind the commands of God, were ordained by the Creator himself; and the embroidered devices thus keep constantly before our eyes the great truths of our religion †." The Italian philosopher, Palmieri, deemed it belonging to the wisdom of a state, that "the sacerdotal vestments should be resplendent with gold and jewels, and so beauteous as to appear, as far as possible, to human art, celestial; and that the divine worship should be celebrated with magnificence by priests of surpassing goodness ‡."

"The Church," says Pope Innocent III., "did not reject all customs of the ancient law, but retained some with provident consideration; therefore the spouse says in the Canticle of Can-

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* Inn. III. de Sac. Alt. Myst. lib. i. c. 51. 53. 55. 56. 59. 62.

† De Imag. Sac. lib. i. 18.

‡ La Vita Civile.

ticles, Omnia poma nova et vetera, dilecte mi, servavi tibi *." But now mark the rites for which these vestments served, all of which are either the external fulfilment of what is read in the sacred Scripture, or some consequence in harmony with it. Thus the deacon, before reading the Gospel, demands a benediction from the celebrant,—Quia nullus debet prædicare nisi mittatur †. No wonder that the Anglicans suppressed that ceremony which thus points to the truth which they betrayed. At the Gospel, cum honore et tremore stantibus omnibus, as St. Benedict says ‡, the ceremonies visibly proclaim that—Hoc est verbum verbi, sermo sermonis, sapientia sapientiæ, quæ attinget a fine usque ad finem fortiter, et disponit universa suaviter §. These lights and thuribles and chanted preludes are ordained, says Rupertus, not that the majesty of the Gospel ever needs to be submitted to the rules of orators,—Sed quia quod in hominibus facere nititur studium eloquentiæ, hoc in ecclesia sua melius perficit summa natura sapientiæ; for, as St. Augustin says, eloquence is the companion of wisdom, and wherever the mistress proceeds, the handmaid follows her ‖. At the offertory we behold signified that all our good is by grace,—Deum enim nihil accipit, nisi quod efficit; nec remunerat, nisi quod donat ¶. The least thing here is significative. Patena is called, a patendo, to signify, says Innocent, a broad and ample heart, that expansive heart which Peter felt when he exclaimed, Et si opportuerit me mori tecum, non te negabo **. But, meanwhile, the tones, the chant, the music exercise a charm which moves and elevates the heart. I shall not engage in disputation here with those who contend whether the plain or figured song best suits the place or time. The chant of holy Gregory introduces the mind to a whole sphere of ideas far above the atmosphere of the world. The music of Mozart and Hayden reveals the divine connexion between art and truth, justifying the old lines by a Benedictine monk, who says—

"Musica divinum donum est, ars inclyta cunctis,
Blanda, hilaris, dulcis, splendida, docta, gravis ††."

It is to moments such as these that the poet makes allusion where he says, "The burst and the ear-deafening voice of the choir, kin to heaven's thunder, so surprised my sense, that I was nothing." Cardinal Serbelloni, after hearing the mass of Palestrino, exclaimed, in the words of Dante, that such harmony

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* De Sac. Alt. Myst. iv. 4.

† Id. ii. 37.

‡ Reg.

§ Id. ii. 46.

‖ De Div. Off. i. 36.

¶ Inn. III. de Sac. Alt. Myst. id. ii. 47.

** Id. ii. 58.

†† Dom. Legipontius.

could only come from heaven, where happiness is eternal. We read of St. Thomas of Canterbury, that "to repress the vain and wandering thoughts of the heart, while the chanters prolonged what is called the mass of the Catechumens, which precedes the offertory, he used to take up some little treatise on morals, or the book of prayers and meditations composed by St. Anselm, one of his holy predecessors [*]." But lo! there is a solemn pause, as impressive as the sweetest and highest strains of an unearthly song; for, according to the custom of the ancient Church, prescribed by successive and express decrees, the prostrate suppliants contemplate in profound silence the presence of the Lord's body [†]. Books are laid aside; and who now can see unmoved, undirected, the Catholic assistants? Let us hear the old author of the Ménagier de Paris describing the conduct that is required at mass from the commencement. "At the Introit," he says, "dear sister, doit lors chascun homs et chascune femme refraindre ses pensées endroit lui, et qu'il ne pense à chose mondaine qu'il ait oncques, mais veue ne oye, car quant li homs ou la femme est au moustier pour oïr le service divin, son cuer ne doit mie estre en sa maison, ne ès champs, ne ès autres choses mondaines, et si ne doit mie penser ès choses temporelles, mais à Dieu proprement, seulement et nuement, et à lui prier dévotement. L'Épitre est ainsi comme donner remembrance que un messaige vient, qui apporte lettres faisans mencion que le sire de tout le monde viendra pronchainement. After this they sing the graduel or sequence, et c'est démonstrance que ce sont les ménestriers qui viennent devant et monstrent que le Seigneur est jà sur le chemin, et qui cornent pour resjoïr les cuers de ceulx qui attendent et ont espérance en la venue du souverain Seigneur. Après lit-on l'Evangille; c'est adonc la plus vraie et prouchaine messaigerie; car ce sont les bannières, les pennons et l'estendart qui monstrent certainement que adoncques le Seigneur est près, et lors se doit chascun taire et soy tenir droit, mettre s'entente à oïr et retenir ce que l'Evangille dit, car ce sont les propres paroles que Nostre Seigneur dist de sa bouche, et lesquelles paroles nous enseignent à vivre, se nous voulons estre de la Mesnie à icellui souverain Seigneur. At the offering you should offer something in the hand of the priest, to signify that you offer your heart to God, and you should beseech the Holy Trinity to enrich it with his grace; and then, at the canon, prepare to adore our coming Lord; for he comes for three things—l'une, pour tout pardonner, se nous en sommes dignes; la deuxiesme pour nous donner sa grace, se nous le savons requérir; la tierce pour nous retraire du chemin d'enfer.

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[*] Vita ejus, lib. i. c. 11.

[†] Thomassin, Traité de l'Office Divin, 18.

At the Agnus Dei we pray for a peace between body and soul, and peace between ourselves and our adversaries; at the Post Communion we should pray that our Lord may not withdraw from us, nor leave us orphans; and then, concluding all, we should recommend ourselves to the blessed Virgin Mary, and ask of her to beseech her blessed dear Child to remain with us; and then thank our Lord for having given us sense and understanding to hear his blessed mass, and see his blessed sacrament, which he has left in remembrance of his blessed nativity, blessed passion, and blessed resurrection, and implore Him to grant us persevering, true, and perfect remission *." In some countries, it is true, the spirit of the world can be traced in the external demeanour of many who still frequent the churches even to assist at the divine mysteries. The abbot Euthymius used to tell those who conversed with him in private, that often, while saying mass, he used to see troops of angels who stood round. Alas! it is not spirits congenial with such company that priests would there see round the altar; but still, even where the worst influence is felt, there are always some visible at every mass who must strike the beholder with a sense of the unearthly majesty of the act at which they assist, with a reverence which is elsewhere unknown and unimagined. But we have not time to mark them now; for at the altar moments once flown cannot be recalled. As a great writer observes, "The words hurry on as if impatient to fulfil their mission. Quickly they go—the whole is quick; for they are all parts of the integral action. Quickly they go; for they are awful words of sacrifice—they are a work too great to delay upon, as when it was said in the beginning, What thou doest, do quickly. Quickly they pass; for the Lord Jesus goes with them, as He passed along the lake in the days of his flesh, quickly calling first one and then another. Quickly they pass; because as the lightning, which shineth from one part of the heaven unto the other, so is the coming of the Son of Man. Quickly they pass; for they are the words of the Lord descending in the cloud, and proclaiming the name of the Lord as he passes by, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; and, as Moses on the mountain, so we, too, make haste and bow our heads to the earth and worship †." Of St. Thomas of Canterbury we read, "Totum hoc speciale orationis genus quod missa dicitur, festinanter semper consummare consueverat." In order not to be exposed too long to distractions, he used to be quick in saying mass; saying that, according to the words of Scripture, one ought to eat the Divine Lamb of our passover in

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* Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 3.

† Loss and Gain.

haste, "juxta quod scriptum est—Et comedetis festinanter, est enim phase, id est, transitus Domini. Comedebat itaque festinanter propter emissiones per Angelos malos, perniciosum scilicet vanarum cogitationum superventum, in sacramentali Dominici corporis perceptione non tardus, non morosus." And Thomassin, who cites the passage, adds, that Cassien and St. Augustin both remarked that for the same reason the monks of Egypt used to make short quick prayers. The canon, indeed, as he observes, is a time of mental prayer *. But the Roman pontifical requires that some of the divine words should be repeated by the people ; for the priest, it states, is to be admonished thus, " The Introit, collects, epistle, gradual, gospel, symbol, and other parts not secret of the mass—altâ et intelligibili voce proferat †." And the constitutions of Camaldoli require all things at the altar, not secret, to be read distinctly, condemning him qui potius mussitare quam legere videatur ‡. Accordingly men were so familiar with sacred words, that they used them to designate seasons and events. Philip, duke of Suabia, says himself, that he accepted the crown on the sixth feria, when they sing—Fac mecum, Domine, signum in bonum §. We hear of the Sunday Lætare, and even of the Fair of Reminiscere, which titles are in popular use to this day ; and, in fact, there can be no doubt that many have been directed to the centre by merely marking these prayers! It is Guillaume du Vair, and first president of the parliament of Provence, who expressed what multitudes in every age have felt, saying, that the human mind can conceive nothing more sublime, more pure, or holy, or consoling, than the ordinary prayers of the Church,—La briefveté desquelles, avec le choix des conceptions et des paroles, a une energie incroyable pour remuer l'interieur de nos affections et les eslever à Dieu.

Much has escaped your notice in this glance ; but, gentle stranger, those who desire to observe in greater detail the mysterious rites performed here, may have their wishes gratified by listening to one of the greatest of the Roman pontiffs. At the words of the choir, Habemus ad Dominum, let the hearer, says Pope Innocent III., profoundly reflect—diligenter provideat, ne cor habens deorsum ad seculum, Spiritui Sancto damnabiliter mentiatur ‖. Perchance, he continues, divine providence ordained, without the intention of human industry, that the canon should commence with the letter T, which in its form expresses the cross ¶. After the acclamations

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* De l'Off. Div. 1. P. c. 8.

† Ordo ad Synodum.

‡ Constit. Eremit. S. Rom. Ord. Camald. c. xi.

§ Ap. Hurter Geschichte, Inn. III. tom. i. 141.

‖ De Sac. Alt. Myst. ii. 61.

¶ iii. 2.

of the preface the silence of the secret follows; as when Jesus, after being honourably received by the crowd with palms and loud hosannas, went and hid himself from them[*]. Lo, now approaching to the highest summit of the sacrament, when we penetrate to that heart itself of the divine sacrifice, whatever we attempt to express, seems to be of hardly any moment. The tongue fails, words cease, the understanding is overwhelmed; for who knows the order of heaven, and places its reasons on the earth? But we knock at the door, if perchance the key of David may deign to open, that we may obtain the three loaves which are necessary for this banquet—for faith seeks and receives life, hope seeks and finds the way, charity knocks and opens truth—for he is the way, and the truth, and the life[†]. O, human creature, be not incredulous! certainly it is greater to create what is not, than to change what is; and if is far more to create from nothing what is not, than to transmute what is into something else[‡]. Egypt is the world; the exterminator is the devil; the lamb is Christ; the blood of the lamb, the passion of Christ; the house of souls, bodies; the threshold of the house, thoughts of the heart. These we stain with blood by the faith of the passion; these we stain with blood by imitation of the passion, placing the sign of the cross within and without, against the adverse aerial powers: finally, we eat the flesh of the Lamb when in the sacrament we take the true body of Christ; for, as the manna was given to the Hebrews after the passage of the Red Sea, and the submersion of the Egyptians, so the Eucharist is given to Christians after the ablution of baptism and the cancelling of sins; that as by baptism we are cleansed from evil, so by the eucharist we are preserved in good; and as the manna led that people through the vastness of the pathless solitude to the land of promise, so the eucharist leads that people through the wilderness of the present life to the country of Paradise. Therefore it is called Viatica, as being food for the journey to our country[§]. As man by tasting incurred death, so by tasting he now receives life; the food that brought death hung on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but the vital food hung on the tree of life which is in the midst of Paradise. That was the wood of disobedience to which man extended his hand, that he might be as God; but this is the wood of obedience on which God extended his hands and was made man[||].

Such is the nourishment prepared for wayfaring man till the end of the world; for as the widow of Sarepta daily ate and never diminished the meal and oil, so the universal Church daily receives and never consumes the body and blood of Jesus

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[*] iii. 1.

[†] iv. c. 1.

[‡] iv. 7.

[§] iv. c. 2.

[||] iv. 44.

Christ, under the sacramental species [*]. This nourishment, too, cannot be intercepted by human delinquency; for the sins of the priest hinder not the grace of the sacrament—"Quamvis igitur opus operans aliquando sit immundum, semper tamen opus operatum est mundum. Sed sicut omnia sunt munda mundis, sic omnia sunt immunda immundis [†]." From the side of Christ flowed the two chief sacraments of the Church, namely, the sacrament of redemption in blood, and the sacrament of regeneration in water [‡]. "By the mystery of the cross he delivered us from the power of sin. By the sacrament of the Eucharist he delivers us from the will of sinning [§]." "He gave us this latter, that because we sin daily, and He now can die no more, by this sacrament, which we receive in memory of his death, we may daily obtain remission of sins [||]." An immense necessity, therefore, of living virtuously is imposed on us by the Eucharist; lest unworthily receiving it we receive judgment, or ceasing to receive it we lose the pledge of future life,—for the lamb must of necessity be eaten, that we may be protected from the devastating angel; nor can we go out of Egypt unless we eat of it celebrating the Passover [¶]." Such then, as far as words can express it, is the thrice holy mystery that this altar witnesseth, such its origin, such its consequence. Christ here is all in all; for the three things which the Church proposes to be commemorated in it are, his blessed passion, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven—of which the first excites charity, the second corroborates faith, the third rejoices hope [**]." And now, closing the book of this great Pontiff, a perusal of which has so lately determined the conversion of the illustrious Hurter—wondrous book, thus treating with angelic reverence on the ineffable action of divine faith, to which a stranger may be directed by a casual visit to the least conspicuous church that he finds upon his way,—must not, we may ask, a traveller who has been hitherto lost and misdirected by mendacious or erring guides, experience a deep impression which no sophisms of shallow heresy can overcome, and feel as if awakened within him a sense of heavenly truth, which will be confirmed and developed by the subsequent observation of all his succeeding years? For where is proof wanting, especially, perhaps, amidst the chaos of these times, to demonstrate the justice of the predictions pronounced by those wise ancient men who contemplated the possibility of what now has taken place in many parts of Christendom when this main way to our country is impeded, or even all approach to it is rendered difficult? "Take from the Church," says the Abbot Rupertus,

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[*] iv. 7.

[†] iii. 5.

[‡] iv. 29.

[§] iv. 44.

[||] Id.

[¶] iv. 42.

[**] v. c. 1.

"the daily obsequies of our Saviour of this kind, and see how well our Saviour then might say, 'Of what utility is my blood?' For these things growing cold which now every where keep alive his memory, all charity will grow cold, faith will be mute, hope will become languid; and into silence will lapse that great cry of the blood of just Abel, which by the traditionary rite of such a sacrifice daily repairs its voice, daily opens the mouth of the drinking and vociferating earth, that is, the Church, proclaiming Cain accursed, and demanding vengeance for the blood that was shed. But with this great memory thus perpetuated, the charity of Christ is kept constantly warm, resting on the foundation of the edifice of faith, and reviving daily the hope of the remission of human sins *." In fine, many philosophers have felt constrained to acknowledge that in the mysteries of the Catholic altar, are found the sole efficacious means for preserving at the elevation of Christian manners the society of the human race; and that in adaptation for such an end, they surpass all that the inventive genius of man could have ever conceived. In fact, wherever Catholicity extends, the same results are required, and more or less obtained. Everywhere men are familiarized with the great lesson taught by St. Chrysostom, saying, "Thus ought we to go out from the churches, as if from a holy sanctuary, as if fallen from heaven, rendered more modest, philosophizing, doing and saying all things with moderation and temperance; that the wife seeing her husband returning from the assembly, the father the son, and the son the father, the servant the lord, the friend the friend, and the enemy the enemy, may all derive somewhat of the utility which we bring away ourselves. For they derive utility if they perceive that you are become more mild, more patient, more religious. Let it be present to your mind at what mysteries it has been granted to you to assist; how you are initiated; with whom you offer that mystic song; with whom you pronounce that thrice holy hymn. Teach the profane that you keep choir with seraphim, that you belong to a celestial people, that you are inscribed in the choir of angels, that you have spoken with the Lord, and kept company with Christ †." Over one door of the Basilica at Nola. were therefore these lines inscribed—

"Quisquis ab æde Dei perfectis ordine votis,
Egrederis, remea corpore, corde mane ‡."

Of the attraction of the divine mysteries to those who are of the household of faith, I have no occasion here to speak, further

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* De Divinis Officiis, lib. ii. c. 1.
† S. Chrysostom, tom. v. Hom. 16.
‡ Div. Paulini Epist. xii.

than to remark, that its results cannot fail to draw the attention of those who are strangers, who would be greatly at a loss to account for so general a phenomenon which can be observed throughout the entire world, under every possible variety of circumstances and national character, if they were in habits of heeding difficulties in the way of their own error. Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi, in domum Domini ibimus. "O worthy exultation," exclaims St. Anthony of Padua, "to contend for going to that house which receives only the just, which contains angels, and beholds the Author Himself of all creatures—desirable house, formed of living stones*!" In fact, everywhere we meet persons of all conditions, who can remind us of the words of St. Augustin—"Run to the Church, as before your conversion you ran to the theatre," and whose experience explains the conclusion of his sentence—"Unde nata est ista suavitas, nisi quia Dominus dabit suavitatem, et terra dabit fructum†?" During the middle ages, the citizens of Paris and elsewhere used to seek, as a singular favour, permission to have a private entrance into the Church nearest their houses. Thus, in 1304, Alix, who gave her house and garden to the Church of St. Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, required as a condition that she should have a key "pour entrer à sa fantaisie‡;" and Alain and his wife had permission to have a little window looking into the same church, through which they could assist at the offices§; for it seemed as if they could never be tired hearing them. Henry III. of England used to hear each day three masses in plain chant, besides others said secretly. One day St. Louis, conversing with him on this devotion, and observing that it was not always necessary to assist at masses, but that as many sermons as possible should be heard, King Henry replied, "I prefer seeing often my friend to hearing any one speak of Him, however excellent may be his discourse‖." In one of the old mysteries this love for the sacred offices, associated with a charity for the poor, which has given up in alms what was necessary for gratifying it, is rewarded by the vision of a mass wholly celestial, which might be cited as exemplifying the exalted view taken by devout souls within the Church of the majesty of the sacred mysteries in their ordinary mode, which rendered conceivable this extraordinary celebration. The holy Guibour on the Purification laments thus—"Alas! I have cause for weeping, for on this day I used always to have a priest to say mass in my oratory, now I cannot have one, for I have given all that I possess;

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* S. Ant. de Pad. Expos. Myst. in Ps. 121.

† In Ps. 84.

‡ Le Roux de Lincy, Femmes célèbres de l'ancienne France, i. 533.

§ Id.

‖ M. Paris ad ann 1273.

I have given even, for the love of our Lady, the mantle I used to wear when I went out, so that of necessity now I cannot go to the Church." On this occasion a mass is divinely celebrated before her by angels : then she wakes and cries, " Ah! Lady, I thank thee for thy great goodness. O God, where have I been? Truly it seemed to me that I was in a great church, where I saw thee as a queen, and with thee a multitude of saints. There thy Son sung the mass, of which St. Vincent was the deacon, and St. Laurence the subdeacon. There was a saint who gave a taper to each, beginning with thee, and coming to me the last." This, indeed, is a legendary citation ; but as far as the conviction of the intelligence is concerned, the fact is, that such visions are historical, having been imparted to many holy persons, as to Marina de Escobar. St. Gertrude, on the Sunday Gaudete, being unable to hear mass, beheld in ecstatic vision our Lord Himself celebrating the mystery of his sacrifice before her, with seraphim and cherubim, angels and principalities, and all the choir of saints assisting at the celestial altar *.

Before we depart, it may be well to remark, that the very titles of churches can still, in unfaithful lands, direct the stranger to Catholicity, through the saint under whose invocation they are placed ; for the old designation, as experience proves, will still remain on the tongues of the people ; and therefore, in reference to them, men the most hostile are constrained to pronounce often such names as Cuthbert, Dunstan, Alban, Botolph, Edmund, and, above all, St. Mary ; so that if ever the hour of reflection and consistency should sound for them, they are led by hagiography and the Gospel unto truth. Indeed, one of the most callous observers is struck, in Spain, with the titles of the Asturian churches. " Here," he says, " are found sites and churches of the eighth century, and whose nomenclature is remarkable. The extreme antiquity of the creed is evidenced by the primitive names of the parishes, and the odd quaint saints who are their tutelars, although elsewhere unknown." " Not, however, be it repeated, to saints in honour of God, but to God in honour of saints," as Pope Innocent III. says, " are churches dedicated, altars consecrated, priests appointed, sacrifices offered †." In Spain, England, Germany, and Gaul, it was the custom of the Benedictines to place the principal churches under the invocation of St. Peter, in order to testify their attachment to the Holy See ‡.

Churches were also associated with the saints in whom the

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* Insin. Div. Piet. seu Vit. et Revelat. S. Gertrudis Abb. lib. iv. c. 62.

† De Sac. Alt. Myst. iii. xi.

‡ Ypes Mont Serrat. Chronic. Gen. Ord. S. Ben. 1. ad ann. 544.

praise of Christ for ever flourished with a local memory. Thus, Clothaire, on the death of St. Medard, full of days and sanctity, whom he buried with great honour at Soissons, began to build over him, as St. Gregory of Tours says, "a great Basilica, which his son Sigibert terminated; at whose blessed sepulchre," adds the historian, "we have seen the chains and bonds of captives lying broken in testimony of his virtue *."

Travellers, in the middle ages, used to inquire under what saint's invocation was placed each church that they passed; and the people were never at a loss to satisfy them, so that sometimes antiquarians themselves used to apply to peasants for information. "The place indeed called Eppach," says Raderus, "still exists; but Carolus Stengelius relates that many learned men had long sought in vain to discover traces of the church. At length," he says, "by chance I met a rustic who, after being carefully questioned, replied to me that in Eppach there was no church of the title of St. Mary and of St. Laurence, though there were two churches there; but that, at an hour's journey from there, not far from the river Lyco, in a place solitary and wholly desert, there was a small chapel under that title. I concluded at once that this must have been the very church in which we read that St. Wicterp used to delight †." Cæsar of Heisterbach relates an instance of the same curiosity, which was satisfied in a very different manner. "For some cause," saith he, "it was necessary that some abbots of our order should be sent to the Emperor Henry, son of Frederick; and Lord Peter, abbot of Clairvaux, proceeded to him; and because the Lord of Citeaux could not go in person, he sent his prior. Coming to Spires, and entering the church of St. Mary, whose structure is of such stupendous magnitude, after praying, they rose up and went about the church, considering the different parts; but the said Peter, whose thoughts and delights were not in corruptible edifices, but in the building of the heavenly Jerusalem, persevered in prayer. At length, all going out, being honourably saluted in the porch by the canons, and invited to dinner, one of the abbots was asked in whose honour the church was consecrated; and the clergy answering, Of our Lady St. Mary; the abbot of Clairvaux inconsiderately added, I knew it was; which word struck the prior of Citeaux, who said nothing at the time, but after leaving the city he said to the abbot, My Lord Abbot, tell me how you came to know that the monastery of Spires was under the invocation of our Lady; and he replied, It seemed to me most probable that so beautiful a building had been placed under the patronage of the Mother of God and Queen of

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* Hist. lib. iv. 19.

† Rad. Bavaria Sancta, 50.

Heaven. The prior knowing his sanctity, and thinking from his manner that there was more in it than he seemed inclined to avow, said, On this journey I represent the Lord Abbot of Citeaux, by whose authority I charge you to tell me the truth. Then he with great humiliation said, While prostrate before the altar for my sins and negligences on the road, the blessed Virgin appeared to me, and pronounced the benediction which we use on receiving returning brothers. This was related to me by an abbot of our order, in whose house Peter had often been received *."

Churches pointed to the Catholic faith also by the historical associations connected with them. to which the local ritual sometimes made allusion, as in the Sarum office, on the feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, which prescribed this anthem,—

"Felix locus, felix ecclesia in qua Thomæ
Vigit memoria : felix terra quæ dedit
Præsulem, felix illa quæ fovit exulem ;"

and in the ritual observed in the church of St. Germain l'Auxerre, at Paris, where on Septuagesima Sunday the psalm Laudate Dominum de cœlis, with Alleluja between each verse was sung at matins to commemorate an angelic vision in the church of St. Alban, at Auxerre, built by St. Germain. "I confess, brethren," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "that as often as I enter that church of Toledo, in which the virgin martyr Leocadia appeared to St. Ildephonso, in presence of king Recisiund and all the people, I experience a profound reverence and peculiar devotion. There the celestial vestiges remain impressed ; and a certain heavenly fragrance breathes, which excites the spirit and animates the mind to love †." Of that most august and religious church of the blessed Virgin called De Pilari, at Saragossa, the Spaniards say, "Such is its antiquity and sanctity, ut cum illuc eamus, non ad ædem Virginis, sed ad ipsam Virginem videamur proficisci. This church being in ruins after the invasions of the Moors, the Bishop, Petrus Librana, invited all the Christians of the whole world to assist in its restoration. The document, in ancient Gothic characters, covered with stains and dust, but still legible, was found by Blanca in that Church ‡."

The miraculous deliverance of Saragossa from the Moors, attested by constant tradition, is also testified by the very structure of several churches, especially by that of blessed Mary del Portillo, as Pope Adrian admits in his letters of indulgence to that church. The monuments of that church record, that at the time when the Christians had recovered possession of Saragossa,

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* vii. c. xi.

† S. Thom. à Vill. de S. Ildephonso, i.

‡ Hieron. Blanca Aragonensium Rerum Comment. 139.

an attempt to recover it was made one night by the Moors, and that when part of the wall had been already thrown down by them, the blessed Virgin, with a celestial host, appeared in the air, and that afterwards, on the spot where she had saved the city, the Christians erected this church of St. Mary del Portillo, to commemorate the event, and also built several others round the walls, to serve as a protection for ever to the city *." Not to multiply instances which every one's observation can sufficiently supply, we may proceed to observe that churches can direct strangers to the Catholic faith by a consideration also of the men who built them, and even of the means employed in their construction. It was a natural sentiment which dictated the lines—

———" And may rest
And place of pardon granted be to all
That rear'd these glorious shrines and sacred towers;
And may their prayers be with us to inspire
Like offices on earth, till we shall learn,
By often communing with them, to share
Through kindred deeds with them the heavenly realm †!"

Who then, in the first place, were these men? The answer involves no difficulty. It was Catholic kings, bishops, abbots, and the faithful poor who raised nearly all these religious structures; and we may add, with strict historical accuracy, that the intention and dispositions which actuated them were those expressed by King David, as recorded in the book of God; for the passage in which he addresses the Almighty might be thought extracted from some mediæval chronicle, so thoroughly were many founders of Catholic churches imbued with that spirit. They also, like Israel's king, rejoiced on such occasions with a great joy, and said, " Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, our Father, from eternity to eternity. Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to promise thee all these things? All things are thine, and we have given Thee what we received of thy hand. For we are sojourners before Thee and strangers, as were all our fathers. Our days upon earth are as a shadow, and there is no stay. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build Thee a house for thy Holy name is from thy hand, and all things are thine. I know my God that Thou provest hearts and lovest simplicity, wherefore I also in the simplicity of my heart have joyfully offered all these things; and I have seen with great joy thy people which are here present offer Thee their offerings. O Lord God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep for ever this will of their

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* Id. 142.

† Morris.

heart, and let this mind remain always for the worship of Thee*." Would you trace the conformity? Then read the history of the building or consecration of any church during the middle ages, as related by some contemporary.

Philip, Abbot of Goodhope, says to Henry, Count of Troyes, "You spare no pains or expense in building and enriching churches, and providing for collegiate choirs, with which assemblies, when solemn psalmody is sung with hymns and canticles, and sweet organs producing a concordant melody, they say you are delighted, as if you heard a certain harmony of the firmament and music of the stars, or rather, to speak more rightly, the symphony of angels, and the prophecies of the heavenly song [illegible]†." Earl Richard, brother of Henry III., on the Vigil of St. Leonard, assisted at the consecration of the church he had built at Hales, which he raised and founded at great expense, the structure costing him 10,000 marks. "Would to God," he exclaimed after the ceremony, "that I had spent as wisely and usefully the money which I have expended on the Castle of Wallingford‡!"

"When the brave Emperor Charles," says an old historian, "might have enjoyed some repose, he chose not to indulge in rest, but to labour for the divine service; and so he began to build the church of Aix-la-Chapelle§."

St. Aldhelm supplied the lines which might have been read in the Basilica, built by the daughter of a king of England.

"Hoc templum Bugge pulcro molimine structum,
Nobilis erexit Centwini filia regis,
Qui prius imperium Saxonum rite regebat;
Donec, præsentis contemnens culmina regni,
Divitias mundi rerumque reliquit habenas,
Plurima basilicis impendens rura novellis,
Qua nunc Christicolæ servant monastica jura||."

Menedemus helping to build a house, and carrying mortar to the roof, used to hide himself, through shame, when any one passed¶. The Catholic religion imparted a different spirit, when learned abbots, bishops, and cardinals used to labour like simple masons in building the churches which modern architects destroy, as at St. Denis, in their unskilful attempts to strengthen towers that would without them have still stood for ages.

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[*] 1 Paralip. 29.

[†] Epist. ap. Rer. Gallic. et Francic. Script. tom. xvi.

[‡] Matt. Paris ad ann. 1251.

[§] Dom. Boug. tom. v. 118.

[||] S. Aldhelmi Op.

[¶] Diog. Laert.

glorious monuments of Catholic devotion. St. Hugues, of Lincoln, assisting at the building of that Cathedral, and carrying stones on his shoulders in a hod, a cripple upon crutches asked permission to imitate him, being moved with a hope of recovering the use of his limbs. A hod, containing stones, was given to him; he carried it, aided by his two crutches. A few days afterwards he could work with only one crutch, and a little later he discarded even that, and assisted at the building without either staff, perfectly recovered; since which cure, says Matthieu Paris, nothing can separate him from his hod *.

At the door of the church of the monastery of St. Peter de Montibus, founded by St. Fructuosus, there was an inscription on stone, stating that, in 1633, Gennadius, Bishop of Astorga, with twelve monks, had rebuilt it, and ending with these words—a fundamentis mirifice, ut cernitur, denuo erexit non oppressione vulgi, sed largitate pretii et sudore fratrum hujus monasterii †.

Thus we pass to the second consideration, which has regard to the means employed in constructing the Catholic churches. In fact, as the last passage shows, the means were holy as the men who used them. We read in the Magnum Speculum that, "A certain usurer constructed a church with the fruit of his usury, and invited the bishop to dedicate it. The bishop came, and, commencing the ceremony, saw the demon clad as a prelate, who said to him, 'Wherefore do you consecrate my church? It is I who have jurisdiction here; for it is built with the fruit of rapine and usury.' The bishop and his train separated, and soon after the edifice fell with a mighty crash ‡." The narrative can be cited as indicating what was the general usage and the public opinion. In fine, the churches are often express memorials of the faith of the Catholic population in former times, as they continue to be when now constructed of that which animates our own. The church of Bec was built by the alms chiefly of the poor—opus pulchrum et maximum solis pauperum expensis §. To this day the poor are the builders of churches in France and Ireland. In Savoy, the practice dates from time immemorial. Still every year the Savoyards of the diocese of Tarentaise leave home in troops, some for Germany, others for Italy, others for France—all under a chief who has the deposit of their gains. On leaving home, and on their return to it, they receive the bishop's benediction. Whatever they bring back is divided into three portions, of which the first is for the Church, the second for the poor, and the third for them-

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* Ad ann. 1200.

† Anton. de Yepes, Chronic. Gen. Ord. S. Ben. tom. ii. 208.

‡ 253.

§ Act. SS. Ord. S. Ben. ix. 352.

selves. It was with the former that all the churches of the diocese were rebuilt in the seventeenth century *.

" On the east end of the cathedral of Astorga, which towers over the lofty and precipitous wall, a colossal figure of lead may be seen on the roof. It is the statue of a Maragato carrier, in his national dress, who endowed the cathedral with a large sum ; for many of these men," says a recent traveller, " possess considerable riches, part of which they not unfrequently bequeathe to the erection or embellishment of religious houses."

The churches therefore can direct us to the Catholic faith by a consideration both of the men who built, and of the means that were employed in constructing them, even down to the last century ; at which deplorable epoch might have been used the words of a holy bishop, who witnessed the same labour of love under the analogous circumstances of the devastation of the barbarians, and the fall of the Roman empire, and who exclaimed, when invited to consecrate a new Baptisterium, " A great example to see new churches built, when scarcely any one dares to repair the old † !"

In fine, the churches themselves, viewed in all their bearings, as involving all these considerations of men and things, are found in point of fact to direct so clearly to the Catholic Church, that persons who reject faith have at all times, as at the present day, been willing to avow a conviction that they are identified and synonymous with what they term Popery ; and, upon the whole, after these few cursory observations, we cannot feel surprised that they should be disposed to arrive at that conclusion, since each is, in fact, nothing else but what it seems—a palace for the crowned truth to dwell in ; consequently, a superfluous useless pile, when it becomes the property of intellectual democrats, who acknowledge no sovereignty in the domain of thought, but ask, with Pilate, What is truth ? after they have dethroned it in the world, as far as their power extends, and substituted, under the name of reformation, universal anarchy in its stead. Hence, that " the restoration of churches is the restoration of Popery," can be proved, we are now told, in one sermon by Close, the perpetual curate of Cheltenham ‡. It is to be wished that all the conclusions of such men were equally logical and consistent. A close, then, to many disputes, though curates might change, would be perpetual. The truth is, that churches being only necessary for the purposes of the Catholic religion, their reconstruction may naturally excite the alarm of those who would guard against a return to faith, and who " feel free to

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* Dict. Morèri Supp. A. Tarent.

† Sidon. Apoll. Epist. lib. iv. 15.

‡ 1844.

confess" that a mosque suits them better. " Come here, papist," says the agent of the Bible Society, " and take a lesson from the Moor. Here is a house of God, in externals at least, such as a house of God should be : four walls, a fountain, and the firmament above." A restoration of the ancient Christian churches is, in fact, inconsistent with the fundamental principles which are employed to keep from constant solution the whole strained and imperfect agglomeration of views which forms the modern religion. It is equally uncongenial with the inevitable results of the moral analysis which produces it. We need only refer to the office in the Roman Pontifical, to see proof of the irreconcilable antagonism which exists between the whole principle of a consecrated pile and the manners of those who reject authority in matters of faith. For a house dedicated to eternal peace cannot, of right, belong to those who only exist by perpetual hostility and opposition. A place for unity, where pontiffs may see accomplished the object of their prayer for the people—" ut nullâ divisione mentium, nullâque perversitatis varietate sequestrentur, quos sub unius regimine pastoris unus grex continet *," cannot be intended for those who think a division of minds to be a thing good and unavoidable, who avow their resolution to wander on for ever self-directed, disdaining the multitude, and who, on that very account, like the most learned of the Pagans, as Cicero remarks, do not approve of men building new temples, with whom Cicero himself only declines fully agreeing through respect for Pompey †. A place guarded and guarding by the cross, sacred to purity and to religious reverence, can have no attractions for those who neither credit nor desire such protection, who abhor such purity as superstition, and who reject such reverence as error. A place delivered from the turmoil of the demon and from all his frauds, cannot be desirable to those who disbelieve the existence of diabolic contagion, who invite confusion as a wholesome activity, and who deem that the passions of nature should be uncontrolled. And accordingly, if we consider the facts of the case, we shall not be long in discovering, that from the very first moment of the last outbreak in the sixteenth century, the churches and ecclesiastical buildings have been regarded as useless incumbrances to ground that might be made valuable, or even as pernicious memorials in regard to those who rejected the faith to which they owed their origin. Where did the false reform penetrate without giving signal proof how it despised and hated even the material edifices which belonged to the Catholic Church ? " There were in London," says Stowe, " and within the suburbs thereof, in the reign of Henry II. (as writeth Fitz-Stephens,) thirteen great conventual churches, besides the lesser sort called parish churches,

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* De Eccles. Cons. Pont. Rom

† De Off. lib. ii. 17.

to the number of one hundred and twenty-six, all which conventual churches, and some others since that time founded, are now suppressed and gone, except the cathedral church of St. Paul in London, and the college of St. Peter at Westminster." One instance of contempt, related by the same writer, will suffice to show, that from the first it was the same spirit as that which now prevails in Spain and Switzerland which was at work; for, speaking of a certain great tower, with bells, he says, "The same had a great spire of timber covered with lead, with the image of St. Paul on the top, but was pulled down by Sir Miles Partridge, knight, in the reign of Henry VIII. The common speech then was, that he did set a hundred pounds upon a cast at dice against it, and so won the said clochiard and bells of the king; and then causing the bells to be broken as they hung, the rest was pulled down. This man was afterward executed on the Tower-hill for matters concerning the Duke of Somerset, the 5th of Edward VI." "The Priory church and steeple," he says elsewhere, "were then proffered to whomsoever would take them down; but no man would undertake the offer, till Sir Thomas Audley was fain to be at the charge. He then built on it, and dwelt there during his life." The projects of restoration which Stowe witnessed ended as the perpetual curate, lately quoted, would now desire. Of the church of St. Bartholomew he says, "that the timbers seem ready to fall;" and adds, "I have oft heard it reported, that a new steeple should be built with the stone, lead, and timber of the old parish-church, but no such thing was performed." As in the times that beheld the ravages of the Arian barbarians, so eloquently described by Sidonius Apollinaris, "not only through the rustic parishes, but even in cities, the churches fell to ruin, and their numbers every where decreased, no comfort being left to the faithful, when not only the clerical discipline, but even the name perished; for as then, when a clerk died, in that church the priesthood and not the priest died, so that no hope seemed to remain, when the end of a man was the end of religion *." The sentiments of the first Christians, expressed by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, saying, that among the chief sins which drew forth the punishment of Nebuchadonozor, was his having carried away the image of the cherubim which was placed in the Temple †, were wholly discarded by the modern students of the Bible. They carried away or demolished every sacred symbol. When they thought proper to raise structures for their religious meetings, the edifice itself proclaimed that all ideas of worship, in the sense of Christian antiquity, were forgotten; and then even the regrets of artists could awaken useful consideration, and lead men back to truth; for, in countries where Catholic art once flourished in all

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* Epist. lib. vii. 6.

† 2 Catecches.

its glory, as in England, monumental architecture fell so low, that foreigners could only find expressions of amaze * to qualify it. And what a change was here! For in England Catholicity had achieved what its Roman possessors were never able to effect, since they left in it no monuments of their genius; but the Catholic Church, not content with her intellectual and moral victories, had exalted and aggrandized the imagination of a rude people, and imparted to them that sense of the beautiful and sublime which is in such close alliance with truth, and which, by yielding so speedily to the modern influences, might of itself conduct reflecting men to an appreciation of the dangerous descent of the new way, and to a conviction that the object for which the ancient churches had been raised, must have been inseparably connected with the great source from which flows all perfection, whether of genius or of virtue, of art or of philosophy. In conclusion, let us remember that even when seized upon by heresy, and desecrated by its usages, the ancient churches are still monuments which silently but impressively admonish a wandering benighted people, and point the way to truth, ever ancient, and ever new.—

"Regia turris erat vocalibus addita muris."

We all recognize the familiar song; and therefore, borrowing an image from it, let us consider, in terminating this path, how here too are towers built of vocal stones, inclosing a lyre like that which the poet so beautifully imagines, of which the sound adheres to every wall—saxo sonus ejus inhæsit. Ah! would to Heaven that some, like the daughter of Nisus, would assiduously ascend them to catch the faint expressive tones of that harmony, and then, while experiencing the power of such gracious influence, to look down upon the present occupations, and the combats of wretched men—

"Sæpe illuc solita est ascendere filia Nisi,
Et petere exiguo resonantia saxa lapillo,
Tunc cum pax esset; bello quoque sæpe solebat
Spectare ex illâ rigidi certamina Martis †!"

Sweet and salutary would be that contemplation. All the intricacies of the tortuous maze might then be traced without danger of delusion; the turmoil of restless combatants would confuse them no more; and memory, like a faithful guide, would send them thence strengthened and armed, in the panoply of an invincible faith, fearlessly to the goal. Like Dædalus, longing for his country, they would cry,

——— "Terras licet, et undas
Obstruat, at cœlum certe patet, ibimus illac ‡."

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* Vitet, Rapport sur les Monuments Hist. du Nord-ouest de la France.

† viii. 1.

‡ viii. 4.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ROAD OF ARTISTS.

A sweet attraction moves us as we turn upon a new road, which from this spot branches off; since always what is beautiful must please—ὅτι καλόν, φίλον ἀιεί[*], and all that is beautiful in art is here. At this opening towards the East, between noble pines, whose rugged stems entwined below with the acanthus, are gilt with the morning rays, the horizon is broken by majestic lines of architecture which crown an intervening height; the woods are seen through columns and statues; there is a murmur of fountains, where a crystalline wave is flowing over marble shells, through slopes enamelled with a thousand flowers. Here the soil denotes the treasures which lead Pliny to discourse on sculpture, painting, and every branch of highest art[†]. The metals and the rocks, the earths and minerals, direct the toil of those who are its ministers. A certain primitive beauty in the countenance and form of those whom we overtake upon the road, expressing a grace which would defy the competition of sculpture, recals the answer of Eupompus, who, on being asked to name his master, pointed to some groups of young people in the street, thereby implying that nature, and not the work of any one artist, should be imitated[‡]; which was a lesson that the great Velazquez practised, when, turning to nature for instruction, he procured a peasant lad for model, whom he drew in every attitude, and so mastered the human form. Even in the brilliant light that is cast over the whole scene, there is a certain purity which invites us forward with a sense of joy. This path leads us to—

> "The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
> Whence all the world derives the glorious
> Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
> With which high God his workmanship hath deckt[§]."

Already, while visiting the churches, as before leaving the paternal home, we have crossed at intervals the road of art, which I propose that we should now exclusively pursue, and follow without looking aside to any other. It presents itself naturally

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[*] Bacch. 881.

[†] Nat. Hist. xxxv.

[‡] Plin. N. H. xxxiv. 6.

[§] Spenser.

at this stage of our progress, though indeed not to all men alike; since many European states, as if embracing the barbarism which agrees best with the philosophy of their men of letters, seem now to be more occupied with conspiracies against social order, with suppressing the old Catholic institutions, and with some dream of Pagan nationality and savage licence, than with continuing to merit either a name in the annals of art and human genius, for the works of which they have at this moment neither skill nor comprehension, or the liberty which is identical with innocence. The new era invoked by the countrymen of Raphael and Le Sueur has no promises for those who would take the peaceful road of art; their ambition seems to be to consecrate commotion's bitter edge, to dress the ugly form of base and bloody insurrection with fair honours, to render all form formless, order orderless. Their studios are the clubs, their masters are assassins, or at best the barricade; their triumphs of skill to obliterate all that nature and art have beautifully painted on the great scene of the world, and to efface, as far as possible, treacherously or avowedly, according to circumstances, its admirable, adorable traces, with blood and fire. But though they may leave the road of art, once so thronged, to a few lonely wanderers, still no one can travel far without finding himself, through the ordinary curiosity which leads men from churches to visit palaces, formally at least, for a moment upon it. Pausanias is occupied, during a great part of his travels, in describing the paintings which he finds throughout Greece, of which he speaks as if they constituted the very reality of the subjects they represented; and Cicero, while acknowledging that he has no artistic skill, thinks himself competent to speak on the subject from the multitude of works of art which he has seen on his different journeys. "Tametsi," he says, "non tam multum in istis rebus intelligo, quam multa vidi *." Dost thou love pictures? We shall see thee conducted by that love to Catholicity, if thou wilt make right use of it, and not rest with senseless shadows.

That the road of painting and sculpture would lead to truth, if not systematically obstructed or turned aside, might be inferred from a consideration of the imitative character of these arts which are concerned with the models supplied in nature by the hand of the Creator; for art only copies from that image stamped by the everlasting pleasure, which fashions, as they are, all things that be. In early times paganism, then the misconceptions of false opinion in matters of religion, in fine, as at present, a godless incredulity, would of course interrupt the natural order, and close or change the direction of the avenue; but the original track could never be wholly choked up, and the free action of

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* In Verr. ii. lib. iv.

faith would necessarily clear away the incidental obstructions, and restore to human minds the natural access to the great centre from which art derives its noble and legitimate inspiration.

Art itself then being concerned with the beautiful, furnishes naturally a road to truth; for—

> " It loves, even like love; its deep heart is full;
> It desires what it has not, the beautiful."

Therefore God must be the last object in its view; for, as St. Augustin says, in Him only is the perfect beauty. " Pulchras formas," saith he, " et varias, nitidos et amœnos colores amant oculi. Non teneant hæc animam meam; teneat eam Deus, qui fecit hæc bona valde, sed ipse est bonum meum, non hæc*." Count Molé, in a discourse before the French academy, makes an observation connected with this truth. How, he asks, came Raphael himself in his last works, towards the close of his life, to change his style? How came he to appear to doubt and hesitate in his turn? It is, he replied, that nothing is more interdicted to man than permanence. To accomplish his destiny, the most imperious of his wants is to be never content with what he possesses, and never to suspend his course. He must seek and learn, and advance without ceasing or rest. Had he himself eternity, and could he breathe into his work, he might beguile nature of her custom; but thither must he depart, and leave his imitative work imperfect. Polycletus and Apelles, as we learn from Pliny, used to write—faciebat—under all their pictures †, meaning, that they did not consider them perfect, but only rude unfinished works—tanquam inchoata semper arte et imperfecta; ut contra judiciorum varietates superesset artifici regressus ad veniam velut emendaturo quidquid desideraretur, si non esset interceptus. Pliny adds, that he only knows of three pictures inscribed—ille fecit—which were on that account exposed to envy ‡. The devout Zurbaran, as may be remarked under his great picture of the Nativity, adopted the same expression, as did Joannes Ribalta in his youth, when at the age of eighteen he signed his compositions. The best picture is an imperfect thing, and sends its author to the Creator whom he feebly imitates.

By the beauty of the creatures, which are the object of that imitation, man may be led, as St. Isidore says, to the beauty of the Creator §. Castiglione, in his book Del Cortegiano, speaks of the

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* Confess. 34. † Plin. in Procem.
‡ Nat. Hist. lib. i.
§ D. Isidor. de Summo Bono, lib. i. c. 4.

beautiful as a circle of which the centre is the supreme good; and it was under this impression that the beauty of earth, and of its creatures, conducted to God the noble philosophers at the court of Urbino, whose conversation he recounts. St. Bonaventura, who says that "beauty is nothing else but a certain equality subsisting in numbers, or an arrangement of parts in proportion with the sweetness of colours," regards its consideration as belonging to the journey of the mind to God *; and the holy fathers, even when they speak of human beauty, represent it with the same character as did Socrates and Aristotle. Cicero considers the perception of beauty as an exclusive attribute of man, saying, Nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit †. Lactantius, following Hippocrates and Galen, composed an eloquent treatise to show the beauty of each part of the human body. St. Gregory of Nysse, and Theodoret, adhere to the principle that the good and the beautiful are conjoined. St. Ambrose treats, in the fourth chapter of his Hexameron, de corporis humani præstantiâ, deque singulorum ejus membrorum conformatione, dispositione, et officiis. St. Augustin repeatedly shows that decorum quod bonum,—that the beauty of bodies can demonstrate the beauty of souls; and that the symmetry and order of the former have a connexion with the same qualities in the spiritual world, while only later and obscure theologians dwell with an emphasis, perhaps more rhetorical than rational and Christian, on what they term the deformity and horror of the human body. But St. Bridget in her revelations makes the true distinction, saying, that physical is often the result of moral ugliness,—Peccatum enim et indispositio naturæ multipliciter deformitatem adducunt membrorum ‡; a doctrine which has not escaped the penetrating sense of our great poet, when he ascribes to Miranda the words—

> "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple;
> If the ill spirit have so fair an house,
> Good things will strive to dwell with 't §,"—

which seems the very thought of the great Gregory, when the beauty of the English youths drew from him the well-known words, Heu proh dolor! quod tam lucidi vultus homines tenebrarum auctor possidet, tantaque gratia frontis conspicui mentem ab æterna gratia vacuam gestant. But the beauty concerning which art must be occupied, is estimated in still closer connexion with the supreme good than results from the principles of numbers or proportion. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty;" that is all we know

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* Itinerarium Mentis in Deum, 2.

† De Off. 1.

‡ Revel. S. Brig. lib. ii. c. 1.

§ Tempest.

on earth, and all we need to know. "So all creatures of this sensible world," says St. Bonaventura, "lead the mind of a wise contemplatist to the eternal God; since of that first principle, most powerful, most wise, most good, of that eternal original of light and plenitude, of that efficient art fashioning and ordaining, all things are shadows, echoes, and pictures, vestiges, images, and spectacles, divinely given to us in order that we may know God *." Dante, in conformity with the school, observes, that art must study the divine intention; "for," saith he, "philosophy, to an attentive ear, clearly points out, not in one part alone, how imitative nature takes her course from the celestial mind, and from its art. Observing well, you shall discover, that your art on her obsequious follows, as the learner treads in his instructor's step; so that your art deserves the name of second in descent from God †." Imperfection in the execution is combined therefore with perfection in the mind of the true artist, whose faltering hand is faithless to his skill; but the more fervent love, dispose, and mark the lustrous image of the primal virtue, the more perfection is vouchsafed; and this explains the paintings of the Catholic school, accomplished with each gift that art can teem with. Art, moreover, in consideration of the high estimate in which it is held by the Catholic Church, will naturally point to the faith which protects it, and of which, after all, it is only a necessary consequence; for the heart, filled with lively faith, cannot but seek to manifest its impressions externally. Accordingly, where faith predominates, architecture, painting, the working of precious metals, sculpture, and, since the tenth century, in the west, statuary, are inspired by the love of God and directed to his glory. Cardinal Palæotus even says, that "since all holy pictures, expressing religious acts, have no other end than to avert the wills of men from earthly things and join them to God, it follows that the art of painting is to be referred to the discipline of charity, and therefore to be classed among the noblest works ‡." The monk Theophilus uses similar or still stronger language. "Now," saith he, "for your greater encouragement I will show you, by evident reasons, that whatever you can study and attain to in these fine arts will flow to you from the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. By the spirit of wisdom you know that all created things proceed from God, and that without Him is nothing; by the spirit of intelligence you have acquired the faculty of invention, the order, variety, and proportion which you seek in your different works; by the spirit of counsel you hide not the talent which you have received from God, but, working and teaching with humility, you show it

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* S. Bon. Itinerar. Mentis in Deum, c. 2.

† Infern. 2.

‡ De Imag. Sac. lib. i. c. 7.

faithfully to those who wish to know it; by the spirit of fortitude you shake off all laziness of sloth, and you bravely bring to perfection what you commence; by the spirit of knowledge from an abundant heart you predominate by genius, and with the boldness of a full mind you use before the public what you perfectly abound in; by the spirit of piety you understand what, to whom, when, how much, and how you should work; and lest the vice of avarice or cupidity should creep in, you moderate the price by pious consideration; by the spirit of the fear of the Lord you consider that you can do nothing of yourself, that without the permission of God you have neither will nor power, but believing, confessing, and giving thanks, you ascribe to his mercy all that you have learned, all that you are, all that you can be *."

Thus, holy and sanctified in itself, is from the outset the delightful road of art. Let us walk on now and observe to what objects it leads, in consequence of the especial direction in these later ages of the world given to it. Art only cultivates and expresses in some men what all feel. Painting, architecture, and music have a language which is intelligible more or less to every rational creature. "To write and to paint is one and the same thing," said the Catholic clergy in ancient times †. The Greeks called pictures living writings; the books, not alone of the ignorant and simple, but also of the most learned and holy men who confess that the sight of them can often move to tears ‡. St. Bernard even says, that painters by their pictures can effect as much as orators by their eloquence §. "It is needless," as Cardinal Palæotus says, "to speak of the pleasure yielded by pictures, since there is no one so stupid as not to derive the highest delight from the beauty of painting ||." But this attraction is that of instruction itself; for the man who feels it most, Æneas like,

——— "atque animum picturâ pascit inani ¶,"—

learns now to estimate painting as being the handmaid of philosophy: and, in fact, by itself, art can teach the philosophy of life; for mark all that is comprised in its impressive lessons. Here we must pause long.

First, then, history is obviously an object near which, at least, the road of art can lead us. "Neither in the adventures represented on the canvass nor in the narratives of the past have

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* Divers. Artium Schedul.

† Em. David Hist. de la Peinture au Moyen Age. 86.

‡ Molani Hist. S. Imag. lib. ii. 17.

§ Hom. xx.

|| De Imag. Sacris, lib. i. c. 22.

¶ Æn. i.

I ever learned," says the Greek poet *, alluding to such instruction,

—— *οὖτ'.ἐπὶ κερκίσιν οὔτε λόγοις*,—

which is a source that the gravest historians do not disdain, as when Dom Mabillon, in the preface to his Museum Italicum, says, that he will have to speak frequently of pictures, adding, habent enim res hujusmodi non parum momenti ad rem litterariam. To see, like Æneas, represented the ancient deeds of brave ancestors,—

> "Fortia facta patrum, series longissima rerum,
> Per tot ducta viros antiquæ ab origine gentis †,"—

may be sufficient to awaken thoughts for which there will be no rest till the mind consents to acquiesce in truth. The groans and tears of Æneas indeed, when gazing on the picture, were merely caused by seeing Greeks engaged in battle around Troy ‡; and art, under the inspiration of the Church, unless when wars were associated with the tradition of a divine and miraculous deliverance, was directed to immortalize scenes of a different character. Battles occupy a small space among the ancient German, Italian, and Spanish pictures: not, I believe, for a reason similar to that suggested by a modern reviewer, who explains the absence in Spanish art of Vandervelde flags that brave the battle and the breeze, by saying, "in fact, Spain never possessed a real navy," but in consequence of the old Pagan track of art having been abandoned for higher ground. With the ancients, Pallas, the goddess of war, was also, under another name, the goddess of the fine arts; but, as Frederick Borromæo says, "Mars, Juno, and Venus are no longer deities; and if Apelles were alive at this day, he would represent the saints, and not these false gods and their achievements, as he was accustomed §." In recent times artists, as if envying Protogenes for having a king that would leave the breach of walls in victory to behold him at his work,—sub gladio pictam,—present us chiefly with reviews and battles, generals conversing amidst exploding bombs, and conquerors triumphing, with cities seen in flames in the distance; and all the while men complain of the monotony of the Spanish school, which certainly was directed towards other avenues; but that difference arose from principle. Pictures of wars should be rejected, says Cardinal Palæotus. Apud Persas, says Ammianus, non pingitur vel fingitur aliud præter varias cædes et bella ||; but, among Christians, it should be considered

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* Eurip. Ion, 506.

† Æn. i. 641.

‡ i. 464.

§ Lib. i. ap. Molan. ii. 43.

|| lib. 24.

whether such pictures agree with the Christian name and profession, though wars with infidels and heretics may sometimes be necessary. But if we speak of wars between Catholics, in which is shed the blood of the faithful, and every kind of horror inflicted upon them—wars between men of one faith, between whom should be peace and charity in God, we say that their memory should be destroyed rather than perpetuated,—harum rerum memoria delenda potius quam retinenda videretur *. Giorgio Barbarelli, in a picture preserved in the Escurial, teaches the bitterness of war, representing a gentleman in complete armour on the point of setting out for battle, while a lady escaping from the embraces of a child, which she hands to an attendant, betrays the poignancy of her grief. Velasquez, on the other hand, in his El Cuadro de las Lanzas, where the conqueror benignly receives and extols the vanquished, shows the virtues of which a just and necessary war may be the occasion. While Don Niño de Guevara-represented war giving way to the sweet influences of peace and study, in a delightful picture which Lebrun attributed to Rubens.

The road of art, under the Catholic influence, shuns the narrow defiles through which only men of one nation can pass without wounds; and therefore the representation of merely national wars is alien from it. When Louis XIII., on taking Nancy, desired Callot to make an engraving of his victory, that artist, who by his pencil taught the miseries of war in general, prayed the king to excuse him for not commemorating what reflected dishonour on his country. The king then remarked, that Lorrain was happy to have such a son; and when some courtiers threatened the artist, Callot replied, that he would suffer his fingers to be cut off rather than employ them in such a work at the king's command †. But the triumphs of the Church, the conversion of nations, and the high achievements of wise pacific kings, form a wide historic region over which this high instructive road winds delightfully. The holy wars, too, in defence of Christendom, supplied Spanish painters with a lawful and consistent theme. The curious picture in the Escurial, by Cambiaso, of the battle of the Higueruela, gained by John II. over the Moors of Grenada, was copied from a canvass that had 130 feet in length, which was found rolled in a chest of the Alcazar of Segovia, having been executed by Dello, painter of King John. "Pictures moreover," says Cardinal Palæotus, "are great preservers of antiquity in many things which would have perished without them ‡." The old chronicles of religious orders often appeal to ancient pictures existing in their respective

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* De Imag. Sac. ii. c. 24.

† Richebourcq. Ultima Verba, &c.

‡ lib. i. c. 20.

monasteries, to prove certain propositions, as that St. Augustin wore the black habit and leathern girdle which St. Ambrose says he wore*. And in the controversy at Paris respecting the use or renouncement of shoes, the Franciscans, who wished to retain them, appealed to the old painting of their general, Delphin, on the south side of their great chapter-hall at Paris, and also to that very ancient picture on the wall at the left-hand side of the same room, representing, as large as life, Alexander de Hales, seated with a pulpit before him, on which was a book open, from which he was reading to many auditors, amongst whom appeared St. Thomas of Aquin and St. Bonaventura†.

The learned Collius shows that the tradition of painters, in regard to the number of the Magi being three, may justly be regarded as part of a proof‡. Bede alludes expressly to this tradition of art, which requires that Melchior should be painted as an old man with a long white beard, and wearing a purple tunic, a scarlet cloak with a white mitre worked, and purple boots, and offering gold; Gaspar as a beardless youth with a scarlet tunic, a red cloak, and purple boots, offering frankincense; Balthasar with a brown beard, a red tunic, with scarlet boots striped with white, offering myrrh§. Faithful to a similar tradition, as Molanus observes, painters teach that St. Martin wore a white cloak, which he divided with a beggar, to which Fortunatus alludes in the lines—

> "Nulla Augustorum meruit hunc vestis honorem,
> Militis alba chlamys plus est quam purpura regis."

But not to remain longer with antiquarians, let us proceed a few steps further, to observe again some portraits of former men, by means of which the road of art, like that of home, becomes so full of lessons to the thoughtful. It is, on whatever ground we stand, a solemn impression which comes over the mind when portraits of the dead are seen and contemplated; as by him of whom the poet says—

> "And then, his rarely-call'd attendants said,
> Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
> O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
> In rude but antique portraiture around."

I repeat it; many unavoidable inferences and moving admonitions are to be drawn from such paintings—

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* Crusenius, Monasticon Augustinianum, pars i. c. 17.
† Sebast. Roulliard de Melun, Les Gymnopodes, 191.
‡ Collii de Animabus Paganorum, pars ii. lib. ii. c. 1.
§ Id. ii. ii. 3.

"Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis,
Post mortem ducibus *."———

The lady of Elbeuf had a portrait of Turenne in her castle; and when the train of that hero arrived there, bringing the sad news of his being slain, Madame de Sevigné, who was present, says, that three of his gentlemen were so overwhelmed on seeing it, that they seemed about to expire. They could not pronounce a word—they only wept, and uttered cries that pierced the hearts of all present.

The Catholic Church, in requiring respect to representations of those to whom respect is due, acts upon a principle which is in all ages irreversible, since nature, of necessity, will in some sort refer the image or portrait to the real person. Alexander, on entering the palace of Persepolis, seeing the statue of Xerxes, stopped and addressed it as if it was animated, saying, Ought I to degrade or admire thee? And Caius Gracchus, retiring from the forum, foreseeing the storm that was about to burst upon him, stopped before the statue of his father, and, after regarding it a long time without uttering a word, went on in tears. As we before observed, if some in this age would indulge in such natural impressions, when passing before portraits of their Catholic ancestors, they would be guided by them to a happy end. Such pictures seem to recal the very men. "In truth," says a recent author, "when we remain a few moments with eyes fixed upon this picture of Philip IV., by Velasquez, the illusion becomes fearful. Before such a portrait the imagination can easily call back men from the grave." Another writer observes, that the freshness, individuality, and identity of every person in the paintings of that master are quite startling; that he drew the minds of men; that they live, breathe, and seem ready to walk out of the frames. In general, "there is no way of perpetuating the memory of a person dead or absent," says Goethe, "so effectual as by a portrait. Even if the resemblance be not perfect, it charms and attracts. One loves to think in its company. How often is the friend actually present nothing for us but a portrait! He does not speak to us—he does not trouble himself about us, but we think of him and regard him; and often our affection for him increases, without his contributing to this result more than his portrait would have done." But suppose these pictures represent former friends, Catholic in faith, in whose presence we should have felt more armed against vain thoughts, or illustrious strangers whose fame is identified with the Church; and then what a number of sayings, now perhaps in vogue, will a sense of shame, arising from such company, prevent

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* Hor. Car. iv. 7.

you from advancing there; "since," as Cicero says, "not even the image would say this if it could speak!" These grave intelligent countenances seem to refer you to the books that recount their faith, as in the lines placed over the relics of Saints Leander and Isidore, and their sister Florentina,—

"Hi quales fuerint libris inquirito, Lector,
Utque viros credas sublimes vivere semper,
Aspiciens sursum pictos contende videre *."

As Vitet says †, "These pictures speak to you so well, that you would wish to remain before them to speak to them, and stand in hope of answer. Such pictures lose their value amidst the tumult and variety of a crowded gallery." They should be seen on the original walls for which they were destined, as in the house of Del Cordon, in Burgos, where that ancient family possessed the most complete series of ancestral portraits in Spain, or as in the English college in Valladolid, where a modern traveller says, "The most remarkable of all the curiosities is the picture gallery, which contains neither more nor less than the portraits of a variety of scholars of that house who eventually suffered martyrdom in England in the exercise of their vocation, in the times of the sixth Edward and fierce Elizabeth. Yes," he adds, "in this very house were many of these pale, smiling, half-foreign priests educated, who returned to England with no other hope, nor perhaps wish, than to perish disemboweled by the bloody hands of the executioner, amongst the yells of a rabble." It is true this writer has the courage to pursue his theme with other thoughts, comparing them to "stealthy grimalkins, traversing green England in all directions, creeping into old halls, beneath umbrageous rookeries, to fan the dying ember of Popery," but he concludes with the impression that doubtless many a history, only the more wonderful for being true, could be wrought out of the archives of the English seminary at Valladolid. Before such pictures, others might suggest lines like those composed on the portrait of an English Father, by a fellow-monk of the holy order of St. Benedict,—

"In solemn lines drawne o're a darksome ground,
The face of that mysterious man is found,
Whose secret life and holy death can prove,
To pray is not to talke or thinke, but love.

No streame of words, nor sparkes of witt did fill
His tongue or fancy when he pray'd; his will,
Through beames divine conceived a chast desire,
And teares of joy enlivened the soft fire.

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* Reg. S. Leandri.

† Etudes sur les beaux arts.

Yet some have falsly thought his sober flame,
With those wild-fires that haunt our isle, the same,
So idolls to church-pictures like may be,
And fondest love resemble charity."

It is to the reflection that such pictures address themselves; we should see each of them when there are but few present, that as the person it represents lived contemplatively, so the dead likeness should not be given to the crowd. Therefore, like the statue in Paulina's house, it should be kept lonely apart.

Such, again, are those solemn ancient portraits of Bonifacius Valerius, and Michael Carthego, hermits of the order of St. Augustin, in the year 917, which are found in the Patriarchal Hall of Venice, wearing the black habit, cowl, and girdle of the order*. Such those portraits of his predecessors which Petrus Minetis, bishop of Perigord, placed, with inscriptions under each, round the church of St. Front, of which the old historian, Dupuy, says, "Dans ceste action toute pieuse il peut apprendre la leçon de bien mourir †."

St. Ambrose appeals to a portrait as if its resemblance to the countenance which he beheld in a vision, during the night, proved the truth of the latter; for he says, "That the spectre was like him—cujus vultum me pictura docuerat ‡." With some portraits, a strange mysterious tradition connected seems to imply that the resemblance which the real bore to the painted countenance, was an object of interest to the dead themselves. The blessed Torellus was a hermit of Tuscany, of Puppia, who died in 1282. There was a certain lord of Sienna, named Estagius, who, falling into disgrace with his count, was banished to Puppia, where on seeing a picture of St. Torellus, he commended himself to his prayers, and vowed that if he should have leave to return to his country, he would cause his portrait to be painted in his chamber. His hopes being fulfilled, he prepared on his return to accomplish his vow, and desired an artist to paint the hermit. The painter inquired respecting his history, and the description of his person and face. The nobleman sent letters to inquire; but the same night St. Torellus appeared to the painter in a vision, like a friar, with a hood and rope, and bare-feet, his face venerable, with white hair and wrinkles, with pale eyes, small ears, thin lips, and a small chin, turned upwards, in stature about five feet, with long arms reaching to his knees. The vision charged him to represent him so, and vanished. The painter

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* Crusen. Monast. August. P. ii. c. 15.

† Père Dupuy, L'Estat de l'Eglise du Périgord, t. ii. 64.

‡ Sur t. iii. en Vit. S. Gerv.

accordingly pourtrayed him as he had seen in vision, and would receive no payment *.

Painting by this branch of the art seems to invite men to cultivate the ancient honour, the ancient integrity, of which only a vague memory remains. How many portraits do we find of Catholics in times gone by, which recal these words of the orator :—" His lofty countenance seemed to men not pride, but a pledge of security to the state,—tanta erat gravitas in oculo, tanta contractio frontis, ut illo supercilio respublica, tamquam Atlante cœlum, niti videretur † !" How many, again, do we observe endued with an expression of that divine tranquillity, the ideal of which might have suggested the Virgilian line—

" Vultu quo cœlum tempestatesque serenat ‡ !"

Cato the Censor, reproving those who desired to have pictures and statues, said, " They placed their glory in the works of painters ; as for me, I glory in my fellow-citizens having the most beautiful images on their souls :" but the portrait may be of some avail to impart the latter : for pictures are often better company than men ; they keep us familiar with the best and highest characters, and lead to no vexatious disappointments. Timon, therefore, when he hears that a painter has come to his door, answers,

————" Painting is welcome.
The painting is almost the natural man ;
For since dishonour traffics with man's nature,
He is but outside : these pencill'd figures are
Even such as they give out."———

But, indeed, the men who sat for these old portraits must have been inside, such as they are represented here ; and if the painting, silent and motionless, impress us not, neither probably would the living men have exercised on our minds and hearts any salutary influence ; so that a voice seems to issue from each canvass, replying to us in the words of St. Pambo, " If they have not been edified by my silence, they would not have been by my words." In fact, the Greek poet says, the countenance proclaims the man. " Whoever you be," says Ion, " the beauty of thy exterior reveals the noble and generous sentiments of thy soul!" Cicero was struck with the commanding expression in the eyes of Caius Marius ; but ille imperatorius ardor oculorum § could

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* Act. SS. Martii, tom. ii. die 16, p. 503.
† Pro P. Sextio.
‡ Æn. i. 255.
§ Pro Cor. Balbo.

not have more powerfully directed an observer to one order of ideas connected with the spirit of the Gentile, than that look of humble, unaffected dignity and of noble simplicity which characterizes the Catholic great, as seen in the portraits of Venetian and other Italian senators, by Titian, must transport him to another sphere. The portrait of the Doge Loredano, by Bellini, recals at once the high moral dignity and soul-piercing penetration of the aged magistrate, in whom the charity of the Catholic religion tempers justice. Truly, in such countenances we can detect the character of that appetite of their mind or impulse which the Greeks called ὁρμή, though we may not affirm of the artist what Pliny says of Ctesilaus,—quod nobiles viros nobiliores fecit *. That portrait too, by Raphael, of the smiling student, arch, yet innocent,—in quo spectatur, as Pliny says of the boy by Parrhasius, ætatis simplicitas,—and that of his companion in the Louvre, by the same artist, dark, though of exquisite delicacy, breathing the deep contemplative genius which is fostered by the holy faith, can suggest many reflections on the influence of the Catholic religion upon youth. The St. Julien, standing so humbly and devoutly at the side of our Lady, by Credi, and the St. Nicholas, holding a book, reading with such attention at the opposite side of the picture, can teach how sweet, under the influence of the mother of God, is youthful piety, and how meek the character of holy learning in the aged. The holy king, St. Ferdinand, by Zurbaran, inspires admiration for the man who as a king defends the Christian people from the invasions of infidels, and who bears the sword only to maintain justice. Moreover, the incidents which are introduced with deep and subtle meaning into many portraits, can direct observers, by a thousand thoughts, to the excellence of the Catholic faith and manners. The portrait by Titian, at Madrid, of a gentleman closing a book of prayers,—that by Guerchino, of a young man placed under the protection of the blessed Virgin by his four patrons, St. Nicholas, St. Louis, St. Francis, and St. Joseph,—and the picture by Cornelius de Vos, of the family of Snoeck, offering church ornaments to the Abbey of St. Michael, may be cited as instances. By portraits, the great Catholic artists sometimes convey solemn lessons, to teach the danger of human greatness, and the duties of the highest state. Such instruction is supplied by the great master-piece of Titian, placed in the Escurial, representing the imperial family, Charles V., Philip II., and their wives, presented to the blessed Trinity. What an artist otherwise inspired would have converted into the allegory of a courtier, the Catholic painter has made a solemn school to make tremble kings; for there, in presence of the celestial host, are

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* xxxiv. 14.

introduced four sovereigns of earth, playing a new part, with joined palms and heads bowed down: Charles, in his cowl, now the best ornament, and Philip, in the royal habits, which imply so terrible a responsibility; they supplicate instead of granting admittance, and implore as once they were implored.

But let us mark the minor incidents combined with the resemblance of former men. The solemn portrait, in the Louvre, of Philip IV., king of Spain, by Don Diego Velasquez de Silva, representing him holding a petition marked with a cross at the top, and beginning with the word Señor, recalling thus grace, faith, and modesty, shows in the background a chamber of truly cloistral plainness, having a bed, of which the frame is composed of uncarved, unpainted wood, and the scanty furniture of poor, faded silk, indicating the simplicity of Catholic manners in the highest state. The interior of the Escurial, represented in the portrait of Charles II. of Spain, by Don Juan de Miranda, presents another instance of the solemn but simple grandeur of a royal habitation, in which the pictures on the plain walls are enclosed in frames of black uncarved wood, and the floors of each room uncovered.

But art, by portraits, supplies guides also of a different kind from those of a solemn and majestic order. Art sets before us the images of some who by the path of love have conducted men to God; for such is the mission of those whom we have already met upon the road of the domestic life and home, of whom the poet says, "Thou must acknowledge that more loving dust ne'er wept beneath the skies:"—

"Oh beautiful! and rare as beautiful!
But theirs was love in which the mind delights
To lose itself, when the old world grows dull
And we are sick of its hack sounds and sights."

Art sets before us that beauty of mind of which the form recalled by portraits was only the inadequate expression; for, as Scot Erigena, rising far above the poet, who can only say. Par animus formæ, observes: Pulchrior est humana mens ea parte qua comprehendi nequit, quam ea qua comprehenditur *, which fact Cicero seems to express when saying, "that the lines of the mind are more beautiful than those of the body †." These portraits, endued with power to waken memory, can therefore lead like love itself to God; for that was the end to which love's road, under the inspirations of faith, conducted men on issuing into life; as Dante bears witness in the words,—

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* J. Erig. de Divit. Nat. V.

† De Finibus, iii. 22.

———"She, meanwhile,
Who led me unto God, admonish'd; muse
On other thoughts; bethink thee, that near Him
I dwell who recompenseth every wrong *."

They can conduct also to an appreciation of the faith which yields that sweet and ineffable beauty, so mysterious and charming, which awes to silence all at its approach. For that word, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!" contains the secret of this excellence, as Shakspeare seems to have known when he relates the answer of the Maid of Orleans, "that the blessed Virgin had appeared to her; and whereas she had been swart before, with those clear rays which she infused on her had blessed her with that beauty which she then possessed." Art, by such portraits, leads the wearied spirit of those who recoil from the world's troubles, to the Catholic faith, by the attraction of that divine tranquillity which it yields; for a serene peace, exempt from all disquietude, like that which is for eternity in heaven, emanates from their adorable smile; which made Petrarch say, that "the artists themselves must have been in Paradise to have seen such a countenance as that they paint †." There is yet another lesson from these portraits, more general perhaps, but which might lead as surely to the happy centre, if well thought upon; for the short duration of the most perfect things in time which they so impressively suggest is certainly calculated to impart a salutary sense of the supreme importance of securing the loveliness which will endure for the eternal years. These pictures seem to say,—

"All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish."

In the Spanish gallery of the Louvre, are two portraits of Mary of Austria, the second wife of Philip IV. The one by Don Diego Velasquez de Silva, representing her in the full bloom of youth, and adorned with all the gay attirements which the fashion of the court at that time deemed beautiful. The other by Van Kessen, representing her aged, dressed like a mourning or religious woman, with not a vestige of her former countenance, excepting in the expression of sweetness, which sanctity had preserved amidst the wreck of features. Thus does painting, like poetry, admonish mortals; so that before each fair face upon the canvass, whose loveliness makes pale the morning, a voice seems to re-echo these lines:—

"Ista decens facies longis vitiabitur annis,
Rugaque in antiquâ fronte senilis erit;

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* Par. 18. † Son. lvii.

Injicietque manum formæ damnosa senectus,
Quæ strepitum passu non faciente venit,
Cumque aliquis dicet, Fuit hæc formosa, dolebis
Et speculum mendax esse querere tuum *."

In general, the lesson from a gallery of portraits is that which we find at Vienna, even inscribed on a picture under an hourglass, beside the figure of a certain knight, painted by Amberger —Vive memor leti, fugit hora, or that which George Wither wrote under the best of his portraits,—

"What I was, is passed by;
What I am, away doth fly;
What I shall be, none do see;
Yet in that my beauties be."

Art has even yet a sterner lesson, by the portrait alone, when it shows the loveliness which has been cut off in the bud; when it brings before us those that the muse of Euripides so loves to sing, when "fortune changes the fates for husbands, and tears for a nuptial bath †." O, let me kiss that hand! Let me wipe it first, replies Lear; it smells of mortality. Three portraits of beautiful women of high rank, in the studio of Debufe, whence they had not been removed after leaving his easel, excited the stranger's curiosity. "Strange and sad is the cause of the delay," replied the paintér. "Alas! in the bloom of youth, as you see, those who sat for them are already dead." The song of Jacob, by Lopez de Vega, in his drama, entitled, The Labours of Jacob, has this burden, "For such a love, O Rachel, years are few, and life is short." These looks, pourtrayed upon the canvass, seem to echo the complaint; for in them, as the poet says,—

"There is a depth of feeling to embrace,
Thoughts, boundless, deep, but silent too as space."

These roses have faded before the time, Spectator; this countenance, so full of thought, reason, will, imagination, can be a guide now to the source whence all good flows to the living world. Turn not from it, like Charles of Orleans, with the words,—

"N'en parlons plus, mon cueur se pasme
Quant il oyt les fais vertueux
D'elle qui estoit sans nul blasme ‡;"

but reply with the poet to his own question,—

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* Ovid, Trist. iii. 7.

† Herc. Furens, 480.

‡ Poesies de C. d'Or. 128.

"Who made that sense which when the voice
Of one beloved, heard in youth alone,
Fills the faint eyes with falling tears which dim
The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,
And leaves this peopled earth a solitude
When it returns no more? Merciful God."

Therefore the picture will audibly repeat Laura's words, and say, "How much better would it be to wing thy flight far from this earth, and to weigh in a just balance the perishable and sweet follies which abuse thee? Thus thou canst follow me, if indeed thou feelest for me the lòve of which thou makest profession." Oh! how it would be wise to hear that fair one represented so! When she was young, you woo'd her; now, in death, is she become the suitor.

Thus, the portrait points in the same direction as faith, when it can extort a confession like that of Petrarch, "Never has the mortal life pleased me, love knows it, excepting on account of her who was its light and mine. Since that she died on earth and revived in heaven, to follow her is my supreme desire."

Art, by portraits, shows us too the fault of those who loved not wisely, and the way of reparation which they followed. An instance is presented by that ex voto diptych, at Brussels, which represents on one wing a girl who weeps, and a young man who prays with joined palms, near the fragments of a broken sieve, and on the other, two monks kneeling, who seem to join their prayers with those of the penitents,—affecting picture which had been offered to some abbey by the persons of whose sin and penitence it is a lasting monument.

But now, leaving portraits, let us remark how the road of art leads to truth also, by the general lessons which it imparts of virtue, when representing the manners and duties of the Catholic religion. Painting is called by Callistratus, ἠθοποιὸς τέχνη—that is, making manners; and certainly the great compositions of the Catholic artists in their consequences may be said to justify the title. As Pliny says of Zeuxis, "they paint manners." But what manners? "With nine-tenths of those who visit the Spanish gallery of the Louvre," says a modern reviewer, "the feeling may be akin to that which Mr. Corgate betrayed two hundred and fifty years ago, when he inspected a certain convent, and found therein all the walls most excellently adorned, but no amorous conceits, no lascivious toys of dame Venus or wanton Cupid; all tending to mortification, all to devotion." Certainly the road of art, under the influence of Catholicity, gives rise to very different associations from what such amateurs desire. Artists, themselves at variance with it, are yet often constrained in Catholic countries to teach its graces. It is not alone horses and dogs and yachts, family groups, or scenes of that

Lazarillo rogues-march life of which the absence in Spanish art is deemed so strange, that they represent. It is amidst common themes, some trait of charity, some practice of devotion; and these, when depicted even by modern artists, whose works, however imperfect, betray a knowledge of what Catholicism desires, when first seen in the annual exposition at the Louvre, can move more than the Ethics of Aristotle or the Offices of Cicero. For what moral writing can produce so effective an impression as the picture? Porcia, after the departure of Brutus from Italy, endeavouring to conceal her grief, suddenly lost all courage on seeing a picture representing the leave-taking of Hector and Andromache, which so forcibly recalled her own misfortune, that she burst into tears *.

"The eyes of men," says a Roman author, "are fixed with astonished gaze when they see painted the act of filial love of Coriolanus, in being conquered by his mother; and the ancient deed seems to revive in the spectacle of these mute lines †. How many traits of Catholic life and manners, seen thus represented in a picture, can direct the beholder to the centre of the moral forest, and to faith, which is the only source that yields them! We find, that, in very early times, art, under the influence of the Catholic religion, had undertaken this ministry. "Nostræ picturæ pietatem docent," says St. Cyril, in his sixth book against Julian. "It is our wish, O painter," he says, "to teach youths whom nature has gifted with beauty, to fly from intemperance, as being that which will inflict the greatest injury on themselves." In his exercise of this ministry, admire the courage of the Catholic artist, and his deliverance from the spirit of flattery towards the great. Observe the basso-relievos which serve for covering to the prayer-book of Charles the Bald. "Assuredly," says Father Cahier, "it was not a courtier who chose to put such subjects before the eyes of an emperor—an adulterous king, and a persecuting prince, the one reproved in his palace by a prophet, the other struck by the wrath of Heaven in the midst of his army; such pictures savour not of flattery ‡."

"Some," says St. Ephrem, "who admire warriors, have pictures on their walls representing the history of wars, to give emulation to posterity, and to perpetuate the memory of brave and great men. Others have paintings in their domestic oratories, representing the combats of the saints, to rouse the hearts of the indolent, and afford delight to the beholders. Live then as if your life were to be exhibited in painting, and placed on

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* Plut. in Vit. Brut.

† Val. Max. v.

‡ Mélanges d'Archeologie, i. 48.

high to be seen by all, and then you will form your actions to be worthy of such representation; for to behold any foul or base act displayed in a picture would excite disgust. No one could endure to look at it. Every one would turn their eyes from it. Let your life then be so composed that the view of it in painting would excite the beholders to a love of virtue *." Simonides said, that "painting was silent poetry †." The subjects which painting under the Catholic influence was employed to represent, and often the mode of execution, as it were by brief and profound words, prove the justice of his remark; and as all that is effected by pictures, according to Cardinal Palæotus, may be referred to the three powers of the mind, memory, intelligence, and will ‡,—we may remark that the object was always like that of the highest and best poetry, to move each of these powers in the right direction. As the Cardinal remarks, "even landscape can fulfil this high object;" for since, as the psalmist says, "Cœli enarrant gloriam Dei, et opera manuum ejus annunciat firmamentum,—it follows that the painting which represents the beauty of the earth, can recal the mind of the spectator to the glory of the Creator §." On the same principle, the flower-pieces by Camprobin are placed in many churches in Andalousia. Murillo said, "That Iriarte produced landscapes too beautiful not to have been painted by divine inspiration ||." In fact, what a religious character do all the great painters of landscape impart to their representations! Claude, the Raphael of landscape, how divine is he! and what a devout charm have the solitudes of Ruysdaïl, that sweetly melancholy painter, who speaks to tender and musing souls in the mysterious language which had such attentive auditors in the cloisters and hermitages of old! The view of the Escurial after sun-set, by Velasquez, can show with what feeling Spanish art could treat landscape, though some would only note in that respect its deficiency. Religion, indeed, is almost always combined with its pastoral scenes. It is a musing hermit, or, perhaps, a company of monks, that moves through the forest solitude, or reposes by the brink of the torrent.

A love for landscape, as for the beauty of all artistic works, can lead to Catholicity as that which pleases God best, by the same principle which renders the painter so anxious to seize any written memorials of the great masters whose pictures he has long studied; for if he loves Claude and Michael Angelo from having pored over their works, how should he not covet the

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* St. Ephr. Epist. ad Joan. Monach.

† Plut. de Glor. Athen.

‡ De Im. Sac. i. 3. 5.

§ Id. l. c. 5.

|| Quilliet, Dict. des Peintres Espag.

revelation of God, who has already, by the objects of creation, won his heart. "Quales impetus habebas ad mundum," says St. Augustin, "tales habeas ad Artificem mundi." In general, a taste for landscape and the picturesque effects many outlets from the maze of error and sweet little pathways to a love of truth; for, as the Count de Maistre observes, "it involves a love of peace," which is a long stage gained in advance towards its citadel. Speaking of the young Eugène de Costa, that great man says, "This taste has a charm, and, if I may so express it, a certain innocence which agreed with his character. Rural scenes give rest to the mind, and refresh it. To praise a landscape, do we not say that it is tranquil?" In point of fact, I believe it will be found in general, that such artists are more amiable than the men who only study nature in books, while certainly the Catholic Church seems to have provided attractions expressly for them. Compare the fiery, forward, wrangling pedant, who comes from the sophists' school so changed that his besotted father, who has sent him to it, would soon rather see him again ruinously raving of his horses, with the young artist who,

———"As fayes are wont, in privie place,
Did spend his dayes and loved in forests wyld to space."

Which of them is most likely to acquiesce in the truth of Catholicity?

The themes of ancient chivalrous romance furnished another field through which Christian art led its followers to a love of noble virtues, forming a wild but solemn avenue to truth. We see in the inventory of the riches of King Charles V. of France, that he possessed in tapestry representations of the Saint Grail, of Fleurence de Romme, of Amis et Amie or the Mystery of Friendship, of the Seven Deadly Sins, of the Neuf Preux, of Godefroy de Bouillon, of Nunail and the Queen of Ireland, of Messire Yvain, of the Seven Sciences, of St. Augustin, of Judith, of the gests and battles of Judas Maccabæus. The Gentile artists, like modern painters of the Jacobin or revolutionary school, made great use of allegory. Apelles would represent calumny addressing a woman with long ears, attended by Ignorance, Suspicion, Treachery, and Deceit; but Christian art was averse to this usage. The Council of Trullo, in 692, ordered that historical should be preferred to allegorical painting in churches; and this decree, as Emeric David remarks, "put an end to an absurd excess in the usage of the latter *." Occasionally, however, the road of art was turned aside by faith to skirt this ground, but never without its imparting truly noble views, as in the painting by Antonio Pollajuolo of the marriage of St. Francis with

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* Hist. de la Peinture au Moyen Age, 5.

Poverty; and in that by Andrea Vincentino, which represents the emperor of Germany, with the kings of France and Spain, and the Doge of Venice, beneath the figures of Justice, Moderation, and Benignity, which should be the companions of power; and in that by Furez de Muñiz, representing a ship in full sail, with this epigraph—"Non credas tempori." Giotto, in his celebrated symbolic picture of Justice, represented it as a winged figure standing on a globe, transpierced with trumpets on all sides, with outstretched arms, holding a sword in one hand, while on the other stands a winged figure of Love letting fly an arrow: beneath the figure and globe are crowds of knights and princes on horseback, who all hold up their hands in the act of taking an oath of fidelity: in the foreground are a wolf, a fox, and a hog, to represent the vices of men. Again, on the Hôtel de Ville at Augsburg is represented, in painting, Wisdom presiding over the administration of the city, in which picture a long series of Christian emperors is opposed to another of Pagan predecessors, each expressing their ruling motive of action. Alexander the Great cries, "Nihil sufficit Pagano," and Charlemagne replies to him, "Nihil deest Christiano." Julius Cæsar cries, "Veni, vidi, vici;" and Charles V., "Veni, vidi, Deus vicit." The St. Dominick and St. Francis, by Zurbaran, standing on the globe, the former treading on his paternal shield of the Guzmans, the latter upon a heap of gold and silver, both supporting the model of a church, and grasping together the same crucifix, upon which the Divine Spirit pours down his rays, while angels in the sky are playing over them with the disjointed fragments of the one scroll, which bears inscribed on it the words—"Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum," teaches a grand lesson of Catholic history, and the magnanimity of holy men in trampling upon the pride of nobility and the love of money. Stowe says, that John Carpenter, town-clerk of London, in the reign of Henry V., caused, with great expense, to be curiously painted upon board, about the north cloister of St. Paul's, a painting of Death leading all estates, with the speeches of Death, and answer of every state, which picture, with the cloister, was destroyed in 1549. In the fresco of Orgagna, at Pisa, Death is represented sparing the sick, the infirm, and aged, and striking the young man who issues from a feast. But now, resuming the usual tenor of its way, art invites us to contemplate the diversified scenery of the world, as seen in the vast field of human actions which it is employed in representing. In general, the road of art, at this intermediate stage, conducts us through scenes either of the desert, the cloister, or the castle, through all of which it can lead to a recognition of the supreme perfection of the Catholic influence. That vast painting, for instance, by the brothers Lorenzo, of the

life of the fathers of the desert, in the Campo Santo, at Pisa, produces this effect; "for," says Montrond, "as we contemplate these episodes of the eremetical life, we feel transported with the ancient anachorites into the heart of their dear solitudes, and we feel a reflection of that profound, calm, and pure security which rejoiced the children of the desert." So also Vitet remarks, "that in contemplating the pictures by Eustache Lesueur, we feel the peace of Heaven descend into our souls; for Lesueur himself, inspired by the cloister, breathes ascetic virtue in all his works. In his life of St. Bruno, this great artist had the happy idea of making some of the monks sit for their pictures; so that he copied not alone their vestments, but their habitual gestures, and all the details of their physiognomy*." It would be difficult to behold these grave and thoughtful countenances without having one's curiosity, at least, excited to inquire respecting the faith and the discipline which produced such results. Philarete Chasles says, that "without the admission of the Catholic mysteries and the whole Christian philosophy, no one can explain the ascetic terror of Zurbaran†;" and this explains why the Spanish school in general is so little prized at present; since men can only really sympathise with what they understand, and the life and grace which it represents can only be intelligible to the eye of faith. Lesueur's picture of the death of St. Bruno opens a whole sphere of Catholic ideas respecting the peace of holy death. The startling and horrible figure of the doctor of laws, which led, as some legends represent, to the saint's conversion, while it excites the spleen of Launoy's followers, might be instrumental in recalling a guilty soul to penitence, struck with the whole character of the scene, as well as by the words issuing from him—"Justo Dei judicio condemnatus sum." We read of a certain rich man, who after being left alone with some Spanish pictures, to wait for the return of a friend whom he had come to visit, thanked Heaven when he saw him enter, declaring that he had felt quite uncomfortable in such grim-looking company.

Death, so often represented by the great artists of Catholicity, points in all their works similarly to the Church. The death of the old hermit, by Peter of Cordova, on his bed of rushes, in presence of the monks from the neighbouring monastery, and the sublime master-piece of Juan de Las Roelas, representing the death of St. Isidore on the steps of the church, sustained by his lamenting clergy, show how tenderly holy men love each other, and how serenely they observe the ecclesiastic ritual while suffering the most intense emotions of humanity to see

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* Vitet, Études sur les beaux Arts, t. i. 164.

† Études sur l'Espagne, 77.

them die. The immense picture by Murillo, representing the death of St. Clare, consoled by a celestial vision, and that of the death of St. Francis, smiling in ecstasy, ascribed to Corregio, in the presence of admiring and wondering angels, throws open the world of mysticism in the communion of the Church. The picture by Angelico de Fiesolo, representing the death of St. Dominick, surrounded by his friars, with angels descending from heaven, bearing to the house in which he lies, and to which a bending seraph points as if directing their flight, the crown prepared for him, denotes the veneration for superiors imparted by faith, the hope of the religious, and the lessons inculcated by them on departing to the other world ; for in that picture he is shown addressing them in the words—" Charitatem habete, humilitatem servate, paupertatem voluntariam possidete." Death itself in the Catholic, as contrasted with it in the natural point of view, is set before us by Zurbaran, where he represents two friars, the one walking mournfully with his face buried in his cowl, and his head stooped over a skull which he holds in his hands, of whom the very shadow on the wall seems fearful, the whole figure and its adjuncts reminding us of the penalty due to sin ; the other, also holding a skull, raises his head with a sweet triumphant countenance, regarding a crucifix which he holds aloft in his other hand, seeming impressed with joy at contemplating the victory of faith over the grave. Even the mysterious legend opens a path of Catholic instruction to Catholic art, as in the painting by Murillo, in the Louvre, which represents, as some say, St. Bonaventura returned to life for three days to finish one of his books, denoting by the sweet, serene, unearthly look of composure with which he writes with what a happy conscience the great doctors of the school could look back from the other world at the writings they had left behind them for posterity. Certainly on that wonderful canvass Death seems to have graven on the face of its victim the secrets of another world, as if the flesh itself bore traces of having been influenced, while in the tomb, by some great vision of eternity. There are modern authors who might gaze with profit on such pictures, which their patrons seem in a hurry to conceal ; for three days after they gained power it was no longer to be seen. In the painting of the blessed Virgin in glory by Blas de Prado, St. Ildefonso, one of the saints surrounding her is represented receiving from Alfonso de Villegas the homage of his mystic book, Flos Sanctorum, which he wrote in his old age. Alas! what would they think of having their works presented to that company ? Zurbaran represents St. Carmelo, bishop of Teruel, in the white habit of the Order of Mercy, writing in a rapture of high devotion under the influence of a vision of the blessed Virgin. Honour, zeal, and every noble heroic spirit, allied to the love of

truth and justice, seem expressed not alone by his uplifted countenance, but by the very posture in which he stands to write. If they were painted at work, the apparition ought to be somewhat different, and the expression of their countenances not exactly such. But all the graces of a Catholic life come into view at this part of the road of art. The long series of monks of the Order of Mercy, by Zurbaran, recal the noble annals of that illustrious order, and their heroic charity in redeeming the Christian captives, while, as if to complete this course, the picture of the Day of Judgment by Rubens, in which he places a poor negro amidst resplendent angels, conducted to eternal felicity, proclaims the voice of the Catholic Church calling all the human race, without distinction of colour, to equal rights, and to the same final happiness of glory. The Carthusians at prayer before our blessed Lady, by Zurbaran, enable us to behold the ineffable expression of the true Catholic and ascetic devotion, earnest, fervent, and full of sweet human tenderness combined with joy. The St. Francis, by Cigoli, shows the seraphic founder as if he actually stood living before us, in an ecstasy. The Kneeling Friar, by Zurbaran, holding a skull, and with his face deeply shaded by his cowl, though raised in solemn prayer, has been enough to startle some frivolous beholders who used heresy as a defensive armour for their love of vanity, to make them feel as if suddenly transported into a monastery, and to prompt in consequence their studied remonstrance against Popish tendencies with the friend who had showed them only a copy made by the stranger of that masterpiece. The picture, by Murillo, representing a little angel meeting St. Felix of Cantalicia, as he walked across a wild moor, in the dusk of evening, and putting a loaf into his sack, shows the holy simplicity of the begging friar, and the celestial favour that it wins.

The Catholic spirit, in regard to the poor, is a favourite theme of such painters. Art is not silent as to the dignity of the poor in the Church. Pope Adrian I. employed painters to represent on the walls of St. John Latran the poor whom he used to nourish—Pauperes picti cernebantur. The patched habits of the friar evincing the patient industry of the needle, and the devices to which indigence is driven, which Zurbaran so loved to represent, convey a lesson of simplicity which, while filling some, who forget the manners of their founder, with disdain, might direct others to the source which alone yields the love of holy poverty. In the St. Thomas of Villanova relieving beggars, as painted both by Murillo and by Matteo Cereso, we see the discretion of Catholic charity which dispenses its bounty, not to lazy and robust mendicants, as the sophists often pretend, but only to the maimed and blind, and to the poor weary pilgrim. We see in those pictures, also, the subdued tranquil innocence

and ascetic resignation of the mendicants themselves, as well as the humble, unpretending charity of the saint, who seems impressed with reverence when relieving them. Another class of pictures, representing the interior views of dwellings, may be said, also, truly to suggest Catholic instruction. The secret Chamber of Nazareth, as in the Annunciation, by Lucas of Leyden, by means of its anachronisms of detail, shows the sweet arrangement corresponding to that order within the minds of the inhabitants, which belonged to Catholic domestic life in the middle ages, when the reliquary over the bed, the desk for prayer, the shell for holy water, and the book of hours, constituted the essential objects. Generally the old pictures of the same school, as may be witnessed in that interior view representing a room and staircase, by Pierre de Hooch, disclose the habits of plain and laborious living, deriving cheerfulness from little things, the sun-beams on a wall, the mark upon a floor, corresponding to some quaint idea, which reigned in common habitations. When sanctified by the influence of Catholic manners, even to old furniture, and other inanimate objects, artists sometimes contrive to impart a voice that invites us to the Catholic Church, by wakening that consideration from the heart of which the absence causes so many to remain separated from it; for these objects are made to proclaim in painting the vanity of riches, the vanity of power, the vanity of this world. An old helmet, with its grim waving plume, is seen shadowing a mouldy parchment thrown amidst precious goblets, and proclaiming death by its decayed texture; or, as in the picture at Vienna, by Francis Leux, we see, on one side, a whole cabinet of curiosities, containing all sorts of jewels and costly objects of art, and on the other, a worm-eaten table, with a lamp going out, near a skull, and the words, Nil Omne, to explain the contrast. Pacheco says, that Alphonso Vasquez proved his admirable ability in his picture of Dives, by placing on a buffet every possible riches, and abundance of delights in fruits, and precious vessels and plate and flowers *, from which picture methinks some great men near the Thames, who admire simplicity in churches, could derive a useful lesson. The road of art leads also through the region of chivalry and the old heroic traditions of Christendom. The deliverance of Saragossa, by Zurbaran, recals an inspiring page in the early history of Spain; and that artist touches a similar chord when he represents the peasants discovering a bell and a sculptured image of our Lady, which had been buried during the invasion of the Moors, and pointing it out to King James of Arragon, who is accompanied by some monks of the Order of Mercy. The grand composition, by Don Juan de Miranda, of

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* f. 422.

St. James on horseback trampling on the Moors, in the memorable battle when Spain was delivered from paying the odious tribute, is inspiring, like the ancient hymn chanted by the Spanish Church on the 23rd of May, the festival of the apparition, which alludes to the event in these lines—

"Tu, bella cum nos cingerent,
Es visus inter agmina
Equo triumphans ensifer
Mauros furentes sternere *."

The picture, indeed, suggests a train of thought widely at variance with the spirit of absolute incredulity as to such legends; but it may not be the less instructive on that account. That St. James has borne assistance to the Spaniards defending the cause of faith is confirmed, says Arevalus, by so many miracles, and proved by such solid arguments, that no one, unless a sceptic, can call it in question. The gravest historians of Spain, among others Ferreras, enumerate the apparitions of St. James during the long protracted struggle; and if these be denied, in his opinion, you may contest all miracles, "cum nullum sit in Ecclesia,' he adds, "quod gravioribus nitatur fundamentis †." Again, the voice of the school is echoed by art, as in that painting by Dominichino, in the gallery of the church of St. Onofrio, representing the vision of St. Jerome receiving the reproof—Ciceronianus es; and, lastly, the lessons of the feudal castle, recommending charity, are heard on the same road, as in the painting by Hersent, which represents Louis XVI. distributing alms with his own hands, in a suburb of Versailles during winter; and, above all, in that master-piece by Murillo, representing St. Elizabeth of Hungary gaining Paradise by acts of heroic charity. There is the palace converted into a hospital, on one side the ladies of the court in brilliant attire, on the other suffering children, lepers, palsied beggars, receiving from the young and beautiful princess all the assistance that religion commands, and that the tenderest sympathy can imagine; from which picture, methinks, a useful lesson might be taken by those who, alluding to such works, say, "The unchanged originals of Murillo's groups still swarm about every church-door on the Guadalquiver, and them we shun as much as we seek their portraits;" for here is proof that it was not the refining pencil of the great artist, as they say, which made the poor, down to the least urchin, as Cervantes did Sancho, company for duchesses.

But we arrive now at what may be termed the height of the pass to which the road of art conducts us, which is the lofty

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* Faust. Arevalus, Hymnodia Hispanica.

† Id. p. 322.

ground of theology, on which painting points so expressly to the Catholic faith, that few who follow it with real affection can prevent their minds from experiencing its happy influence, and being attracted insensibly to pursue it stedfastly towards empyreal regions where it ends.

"Painters," says Cardinal Palæotus, "are mute theologians; their works should delight, teach, and persuade, and the end of a picture should be theology *." Hence we have works entitled, On the Theology of Painters, or Pictor Christianus eruditus; as that by Joannes de Ayala, or the Arte de la Pintura; as that by Francisco Pacheco, all which form a code of sacropictorial law. "The delight we receive from pictures," says Petrarch, "may direct us to the love of heavenly things, and admonish us of our origin; for whoever, seeking a rivulet, hates the fountain †?" "That visible speaking, new to us and strange ‡," through the long course of Catholic ages had many attentive auditors. The Père Cahier, as we before remarked, expresses his amaze at the power of expressing theological truths to which the art of painting had been elevated in the middle ages. "It is impossible," he says in another passage, "to form an idea of it without penetrating into a multitude of details, which long study can alone furnish. Never, assuredly, were the forms of matter carried to a degree so near speech; never were so many thoughts, and such lofty thoughts, transmitted to the soul by the eyes without the aid of writing; but here it was, at the same time, for the intelligence, the abstract, and almost boundless range of written language, and for the imagination the magic power of vision. Add to this, what is truly admirable, that this majestic system of expression was continually consecrated, not only to truth, but to the most useful and to the grandest truths which man has ever possessed. In fine, to note a last and very characteristic trait, all that instruction was at the service of the simple people, and understood by the little children of the poor §." Thus was fulfilled the ideal of Palæotus, who says, that paintings being addressed to four kinds of men, the learned, the ordinary, the vulgar, and the spiritual, a good picture should satisfy them all ||. What Pliny says of the works of Timanthus is true, in a far higher sense, of the Catholic pictures of this class, "Intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur; et cum ars summa sit, ingenium tamen ultra artem est ¶." "To the modern population," says the Père Cahier, "too little meditative, and too materialized to rise to the intelligence of a mystic art, one

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* De Imag. Sacris et Prof. lib. ii. c. 51.

† De Remed. utr. fort. lib. i. c. 40.

‡ Dante, Purg. 10.

§ Monog. de Bourges, 294.

|| De Im. Sac. ii. 32.

¶ xxxv.

should only offer pictures strictly in accordance with history and fact; but the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had higher hearts than ours, and I defy those who have seriously studied the character of this period to deny it. At all events the people then knew the Gospel narrative too well to be led into any error on the fundamental facts of religion. Whenever therefore we find in paintings of this age an apparent anomaly, in an historical point of view, we may conclude that there was a dogmatical intention *." The strange forms of expression on the windows of St. Denis and at Chartres had moreover this advantage, that by the very singularity of the form they forced the people to remark and to retain an important lesson †; and even if men should not understand at first sight the meaning of some pictures, yet, as Germanus, bishop of Constantinople, in the seventh synod, observed,—Imagines caussam saltem inquirendi et pervestigandi ab aliis præbent ‡. Before the Ecce Homo of Rembrandt, a certain German critic is said to have demanded, Cur Deus homo? Painting can suggest many questions which, by leading men to the school for answer, may conduce to their right direction and their happy end; for the Catholic doctrines are exhibited by artists in such a manner, that only the true answer conveyed in the Catechism can explain the composition submitted to the admiring gaze of men. Cardinal Palæotus remarks, that pictures may be classed, like propositions by theologians, as rash, or scandalous, or erroneous, or suspected, or heretical §. The vast majority of pictures of the highest school belong not to such categories, being purely Catholic and canonical; and we must observe here, that this was the result of the principle of religious art, which in matters of faith required a strict adherence to authority and tradition. "It is clear," according even to modern authors, "that in the times of St. Irenæus and Epiphanius, images and paintings of our Lord were reverenced, as having been preserved from the days of Pontius Pilate. Eusebius saw at Pancada paintings of St. Peter and St. Paul, in which the physiognomy, they admit, must have strongly resembled what we may call the stereotypes of the mediæval Church; for of both we have minute descriptions in Nicephorus Calixtus, by whom also is mentioned the likeness of the blessed Virgin painted by St. Luke." The fathers accordingly of the second Council of Nice use these words, "How could painters be accused of error? The artist invents nothing; he is directed by ancient traditions; his hand only executes. It is notorious that the invention and composition of pictures belong to the fathers. It is they, strictly speaking, who make

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* M. de Bourges, 88.

† Id.

‡ In vii. Syn. act. 4.

§ De Imag. Sac. ii. c. 3.

them as St. Basil wished*." Thus, soon after the Nestorian heresy had been condemned in the general council of Ephesus, Pope Sixtus III. placed a Mosaic composition in the church of St. Mary-Major, as a monument to teach the true doctrine of the Church. Therefore the monk Theophilus concludes his work on art with these words, "Preserve, O my son, and transmit to thy disciples these instructions which have been left to us by our predecessors, necessary for the adornment of churches, and a part of the heritage of the Lord†." "The artists," says Père Cahier, "exercised during the middle ages a public ministry; but the grand conceptions evident in their works are not to be ascribed to themselves. More occupied with esteeming their profession than with esteeming themselves, they never sought for originality; they obeyed the general Christian instruction; they were disciplined so as to forget themselves, to enlist in the service of a great social thought which they were charged to transcribe. Hence they cared little for transmitting their own names, feeling that they only worked under the inspirations which they received from the pulpit, from the public faith, from the Liturgy, from the writers who formed the patrimony of the Church, and from the counsels of the cloister. In later times some men supposed that the artist might isolate himself from all this influence, that is, that the plant could be separated from the soil and atmosphere, and that piety and faith were of all things the least necessary for an artist‡." But the vain minds of men unsanctified can hardly now conceive possible the self-renouncements of genius when under the influence of faith. Formerly a pious motive even induced artists to efface themselves and dissemble their own part in a great work as one would conceal a fault. They feared to impair the venerable majesty of ancient memories by mixing with them any memorial of later date. The cathedral, for instance, of Bourges was to be always the church of the first martyr St. Stephen, and whatever changes might be made in it by the lapse of ages, nothing was to be done to diminish the effect of this tradition. It would require much time to exemplify the course of tradition in the domain of religious art. A few observations must suffice here. "To confirm my memory," says the Père Cahier, "I examined over again twelve or thirteen representations of the last judgment, which are all of the thirteenth century, and I could not recognize in any of them, in the countenance or gesture of Christ, the least indication of anger or even of severity; nothing is evinced beyond an austere serenity, neither rigor nor goodness, but only justice; one sees that he is come to render to

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* Concil. Nic. ii. act. 6. t. iv. Col. 360. act. Concil. ed. 1714.

† Lib. i. Prolog. Divers. Art. Sched.

‡ 177.

every man according to his works; and this uncertainty as to the result, holding the spectator in expectation, obliges him to anticipate the future examination of his own conscience *." Again, the artists of the middle age take care to show that the obstinate blindness of the Synagogue sprung from a guilty will, which Heaven abandons to a reprobate sense, and that it is not to be ascribed to a fatal determination imposed by the divine decrees; for not content with painting the Synagogue with her head turned aside, they represent her also blinded by the darts of hell, or with her eyes dimmed by the infernal serpent †. Their lesson is that of the Christmas chant ascribed to St. Bernard—

"Esaias cecinit,
Synagoga meminit;
Nunquam tamen desinit
Esse cæca.

Si non suis vatibus,
Credat vel gentilibus,
Sibyllinis versibus
Hæc prædicta.

Infelix, propera,
Crede vel vetera;
Cur damnaberis gens misera?

Another tradition, more curious perhaps than important, requires that St. Paul be painted on the right and St. Peter on the left hand, for which disposition many reasons are assigned. Some suppose it arises from the circumstance of St. Paul being of the tribe of Benjamin, which word is interpreted—Son of the Right; others, that the right hand signifies the celestial, and the left the temporal life, St. Paul being represented in the former from having been transported to heaven while still alive, as he implies, whereas St. Peter's position signifies the active life. Others again say, that it is to indicate the humility that most distinguishes the sovereign pontiff ‡. Again, St. James is represented with a countenance resembling that of Christ, through regard for the epistle ascribed to St. Ignatius §. In general, the types of our Lord and of the blessed Virgin are authoritative. To the latter St. Ambrose alludes, saying, "Ut ipsa corporis species simulacrum fuerit mentis, figura probitatis. Bona quippe domus in ipso vestibulo debet agnosci ||." Raphael represents St. Luke painting a portrait of the blessed Virgin without looking at her, as if regarding her interiorly. But how

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* Monog. de Bourges, 290.

† Id. 65.

‡ Molani Hist. lib. iii. c. 24.

§ 79. ap. id. iii. 16.

|| De Virg. lib. ii. c. 11.

nourished with the spirit of Catholic devotion must have been the mind of that artist when he represented her adorable countenance!! and what a lesson of piety do his immortal pictures convey! "What human eye," says a recent author, whom I do not wish to name, "could be raised to meet that countenance without bending down? Not one, I am convinced, though it were the most ignorant or the most impious. What strikes and penetrates to the soul is the irresistible power of moral beauty which radiates from the face of the Virgin mother; it is her sublime front, her austere, chaste, and gentle air,—something, I know not what, which indicates one who is above the world, and ignorant of all its smiling vanities." The sight of such a picture may prove to many a providential destination; for we may truly say of pictures, in relation to men, as of books—habent sua fata. Under an old painting of the blessed Virgin, without our Lord, the artist placed these lines—

"Quisquis es, absque meo qui me vis pingere Nato,
Me sine me potius pinge; dolebo minus."

But the same lesson is conveyed without words by Alonzo Cano in his picture of St. Anthony of Padua, receiving in his arms from the blessed Virgin our divine Lord; for such is the present which all those who love her can expect to receive in return for her love. Another tradition prescribes, that Pope Urban I. should be painted with grapes and a vine, being the patron of vineyardmen; for the people concerned with that cultivation have always constantly affirmed, that they have heard from their fathers, that during the time of persecution Pope Urban was concealed among the vines*. To paint St. Ambrose without the scourge, says Palæotus, would be culpable†. To paint St. Francis without the stigmas would involve excommunication. St. Chrysostom would exclude an air of effeminacy from all representation of Christians, "who should," he says, "have the countenance of belligerents, seeing that they are surrounded with enemies visible and invisible." St. Nicholas is generally painted without a mitre, from the tradition of his having been deprived of it during a time for striking an Arian, whose insolent support of error provoked his anger at the Council of Nice‡; and he is painted with three golden apples, to signify the celebrated alms which he gave to the father of the three maidens. The horse of the good Samaritan is always represented white; "for," says the Père Cahier, "the impetuous

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* Molani Hist. lib. iii. c. 19.
† De Im. Sac. ii. 29.
‡ Molani Hist. lib. iii. 53.

force of the horse, to which Scripture compares man led by brutal passion, caused the horse to be adopted as the symbolic expression of the animal man; but as this force can be subdued by the bridle, the colour white was chosen to represent this same courage and force under the discipline of truth; hence the white horse represents heroism, generosity, and right zeal *."

A departure from tradition in religious art is sometimes, however, noticed and reproved by holy doctors; and the results which have followed the renouncement of this control, in latter times, can lead all true lovers of such art to recognize the advantage of that Catholic discipline which imposes and perpetuates it. Some early instances occur. Thus, Molanus observes, that "the blessed Virgin should not be painted in a swoon under the cross, as if an ordinary mother, overwhelmed at the spectacle of her son's death—nor even expressing vehement distress; for, as the holy fathers say, she retained her constancy and hope to the last, even when all others failed; therefore only by paleness and tears is her sorrow to be manifested †;" and Petrus Canisius says, that "painters who represent her fainting under the cross are inexcusable." Again, St. Joseph was not present at the meeting between St. Mary and St. Elizabeth, though some painters, as the Père de Ligny, remarks, represent him in their pictures of the Visitation ‡. When St. Gertrude beheld St. John the Baptist on his festival, she remarked that his aspect differed greatly from that under which those artists represented him, who paint him as old and extenuated; and she was told that they did so by divine appointment, to signify the constancy and unalterable perseverance of his mind §! Joannes Natalis Paquot, in his notes to Molanus, supposes that the story so often painted of St. Augustin being admonished by an angel, in the form of a child scooping a hole in the sand, took its origin from the history of Alanus de Insulis, to whom the same incident, with many additional details, is ascribed: "altera fabula vel historia," he says, "quæ priori fortassis originem præbuit,"—which opinion gains more probability from considering that it is only Cantipratanus who is cited as authority for relating it as having occurred to St. Augustin ‖. Again, although the Père Cahier would not contend with painters and musicians for the ideas which they associate with St. Cecilia ¶, Molanus shows that they have no authority for their representations of that saint, who, he says,

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* Mon. de Bourges, 217. † Hist. lib. iv. c. 8.

‡ Père de Ligny, Hist. de J. C. 16.

§ Vit. et Revel. S. Gertrudis, lib. iv. c. 46.

‖ Joan. Majoris Magnum Spec. 596.

¶ M. de Bourges, 277.

should be represented treading, rather than playing, on organs; for the patronage of that art should be ascribed to David or to St. Gregory the Great, or St. Germain, bishop of Paris, or St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, or St. Aldricus, bishop of Mans, or to St. Dunstan*. But enough respecting these exceptional cases. The subjects chosen for theological instruction, which we meet with on the road of art, are so many, that we can only cast a hasty glance at some, and pass on. Every one knows that in general the whole scheme of revelation, and the circle of Catholic doctrines and duties, as well as all the great events of Christian history, are taught and recorded by painting, which is but the faithful echo of the gospels, the holy fathers, and the schools; and we may observe, too, that it is often the mystic lights of the Catholic Church that pass before us in many of the great theological compositions of the Spanish and Italian painters. These combinations of angels and later saints with the sacred subjects of the Gospel history, though they strike ignorant persons as capricious, justifying the charge of anachronism against the artist, are felt to be profoundly impressive: and they may well prove so; for the first idea, at least, which led to them, may not be an invention of art, however exalted, but rather a certain vague or even traditionary impression, arising from what is related of visions imparted to holy persons, as to St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Bridget, St. Theresa, St. Gertrude, and Marina de Escobar. "I was anxious," says Marina, "to have a picture representing the glorious St. Benedict, as I beheld him in my vision, when by the order of God he preached that celestial sermon to me on the words, Beati pauperes spiritu. But though this desire was strong, my natural propensity and modesty refrained me at first from doing so; for I feared lest, on seeing the picture so mystical, some one might collect from it that I had experienced a vision, which is what I should wish to avoid; but, on the other hand, I was impelled to execute the idea in order that the devotion of the faithful towards this glorious saint might be increased, and that our Lord God might be glorified in him †." The idea in the composition of some Spanish pictures seems evidently to have been taken from what passed in vision, as in that which Marina de Escobar thus relates:—"One morning early I saw the father Lewis de Ponte sitting in a chair with that gravity and modesty which he used to evince while alive. He was considering a certain book that he had taken from his bosom, reading it attentively, while two brothers of the same order held lights. After a while he took up a pen, and wrote some-

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* Suppl. ad lib. iii. c. 49.

† Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, P. ii. lib. i. c. 27.

what in that mystic book *." On the eve of the Assumption, Martin Alberto, a Jesuit of Valencia, having had a vision of the blessed Virgin, resolved to employ his holy penitent, Juan de Juanes, to represent her in painting, as she then appeared. The confessor and the artist betook themselves to religious exercises; and to their prayers were added those of other holy men. The result was, the noble picture of our Lady, exactly conformable to the vision, which long adorned the altar in the Jesuits' church of Valencia, where it was designated by the title of La Purissima. These pictures, therefore, may be regarded as pointing to the mystic school, and to the wondrous glimpses of the spiritual world, and of the triumphant Church imparted to the holy contemplatists of different ages. But let us observe some instances of the sacred lessons taught by painting. Some unfold the great scheme of human redemption. Guïdo Reni, in his celebrated picture at Dresden, representing Christ between Adam and Eve, preceded by an angel carrying an unfurled banner, which shows the object of his divine mission to save men, and efface original sin; and Guerchini, in his picture of the holy family, where St. Joseph holds the book of the prophet open at the words Miserere nostri, supply examples. But what shall we say of the great master-pieces of Catholic art which place before our eyes the dolorous, or dreadful, or joyous, or glorious themes of the Credo? What of the Santa Maria dello Spasimo of Raphael, which the Spaniards call El extremo dolor,—that most awful scene, so pathetic, so noble, so sublime, full of such holy grandeur, of such ineffable beauty? What of the communion of saints, of the scenes of eternal life, showing in attitudes and expressions all that the highest intellectual exaltation, all that the most ardent piety can denote in their excess of surprise, ravishment, and adoration, which entitle Murillo so justly to bear the epithet of the Painter of Heaven? It is best to utter no word, but to repair to such pictures, to see, to feel, and to adore. Descending from such heights, observe only the lessons furnished on the lower paths of religious art. By the St. Augustin and Angel of Murillo, whatever be the mistake before alluded to, we are taught the danger of presuming to scrutinize celestial mysteries with the eyes of reason; and in the Visitation by Ghirlandajo, the reverence of St. Elizabeth for our Lady, and the sweet amiable condescension and gracious dignity of blessed Mary. The beginning of wisdom is imparted by many artists who set before us the grounds of fearing God.

Bogaris, duke or king of the Bulgarians, an idolater, devoted to hunting, wished to have paintings of animals in his apart-

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* Id. P. ii. lib. i. c. 36.

ments. Having built a new house, he employed a certain monk, Methodius, to adorn it with pictures, leaving to him the choice of subjects, only stipulating that the effect was to be terrible, so that it might strike the beholders with dread. The painter then having represented the Last Judgment and the Coming of Christ, the king was so impressed by that picture, that he renounced his idols, and, demanding baptism, embraced the faith *. In the refectory of Cluny, along with portraits of the chief founders and benefactors of the abbey, there was a great picture of the Last Judgment, with these lines inscribed under it—

" Ecce dies magnus, quo judex præsidet Agnus
Spontè vel ingratum cui subditur omne creatum.
Infelix verè cui non datur ista timere !
Nam præsens ignis domus est æterna malignis †."

Juan de Joanes painted St. Dominick holding a scroll, containing the impressive words, " Timete Deum, quia veniet hora judicii ejus." Hans Hemling, in his great picture representing in different compartments the joys and dolours of the blessed Virgin, has left, as it were, a vast epic poem illustrating them. Rubens, by his picture of Christ receiving the four repentant sinners, David, Magdalen, Peter, and the good thief, teaches hope to penitents ; and the artist of Nuremberg, who represents in the picture, at Vienna, Satan sowing the earth, while the Pope sleeps and the Emperor presides at a rich banquet, impresses the beholder with a sense of the danger of neglect in spiritual and temporal rulers. This leads us to notice the moral results of religious art. In the Magnum Speculum an instance occurs of an appeal to painting, to justify the resolution of a convert. The uncle of young Albert, son of the Count of Flanckenberch, entreating him to desist from his desire of taking the monastic habit, the youth replied, " See those figures painted on the window before us. Whom do they represent ? Is it not Christ, his mother, and St. John ? Learn then, that Christ, who loved both so tenderly, and who saw them so full of grief, though he had power to descend from the cross, yet would not, but persevered on it to death. Know, then, that I have mounted the cross of holy religion with Christ, and that though I should see you in danger of dying through sorrow, I will remain immoveable upon it till my last breath ; and if you will be advised by me, you too will mount it, lest the damnable labyrinth of this world should cause your soul to perish ‡." If the stranger might again present his own impressions, he could describe the

* Baronius ad ann. 845. Collius ii. 13.
† Lorain Hist. de l'Abbaye de Cluny, 76.
‡ Mag. Spec.

effects which pictures once produced upon his mind, when, after hearing the Père Lefebvre preach on death, on Ash-Wednesday, in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, finding himself the next hour in the Spanish gallery of the Louvre, where he painted, it seemed to him as if all those solemn pictures of kneeling saints and friars contemplating skulls, were repeating the discourse which he had just heard. Sublime as was the sermon, it lost nothing coming from their mute lips. In truth, the picture is often endued with greater power than speech, as the holy fathers acknowledge. St. Gregory of Nissa, speaking of a painting of the Sacrifice of Isaac, says, " I have often seen this picture, and never could I pass it without tears, so effectually did the picture place the history before my eyes." St. Cyril of Alexandria bears a similar testimony to the impressions produced by a similar painting *. Suso, when a youth, felt such benefit from a certain picture representing the Eternal Wisdom presiding over heaven and earth, and surpassing all things in beauty, that he used to carry it about with him wherever he went, and to suspend it near the window of his bed-room, and look upon it with intense affection †. The picture, moreover, as being a reflection of reality, supplies often the best refutation of the false representations which result from human malice ; and hence, perhaps, some men now endeavour to inoculate art with their own perversity, exhibiting monks in the character which the pens of the impious have ascribed to them, as if conscious that the true image of the cloistral life would arm beholders against the spirit of our age. The picture often acts upon the mind like reality. So ghostly, according to Pacheco, was a picture at Seville, that he feared to remain alone in the chapel with it after nightfall. The altar-piece of the church of Santa Cruz, in Seville, was a Descent from the Cross by Pedro de Campaña. Murillo, who used to pass whole hours before this picture, being asked what he was looking at so long, replied, " I am waiting to see them take down our Lord." Vasari says, that Titian's picture of our Lord dragged by the executioner, in the church of St. Roch, at Venice, has produced more alms than the artist gained money through his whole life of a hundred years. " Sacred pictures being ordained to spiritual proficiency, it is required," says Cardinal Palæotus, " that they should nourish the spirit by expressing sanctity ; so that men who are not spiritual, on seeing them, may feel how little they resemble them, and may be rendered sorrowful, and so recalled to a sense of piety ‡." Such is the result obtained by the art which Catholicism inspires. The solemn pictures by Le Sueur, representing Carthusians, and

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* Ap. Molan. Hist. S. Imag. ii. c. 12

† Vita ejus.

‡ De Imag. Sac. ii. 52.

those by Zurbaran of Franciscans, which strike the moderns with a kind of horror, have a voice as eloquent as that of De Rancé, whose words seem only to repeat the lesson they convey, saying, "Monks are bound to weep, not for their own sins alone, but for the iniquity of the world. Their lives should pass in holy sadness. St. Anthony says to his brethren, "Be sorrowful, day and night, for your sins. Envelop yourself in your robe, day and night. Triumph not; laugh not; let your face be always sad, excepting if any of your brethren should come to see you." St. Isaia says, "Be constantly sad; but when a brother arrives to you, wear a more serene countenance *." No doubt, these pictures by Francisco Zurbaran, that austere and pious master who has so wonderfully expressed the ascetic life in its rigors and its beatitudes, can give pain by leading men to an order of ideas very different from that which is familiar to them; but the painting, as well as the page of the monastic commentary, contains nothing more or less than an image traced from the sacred text—"Anima quæ tristis est super magnitudine mali, et incedit curva et infirma, et oculi deficientes, et anima esuriens, dat tibi gloriam et justitiam Domino †." The pictures by Murillo of St. Diego de Alcala, and by Zurbaran, of a friar of the Order of Mercy carrying a cross, strike the same class of beholders with surprise and anger. But they can be reminded by such painting, that in baptism the sign of the cross is made with holy oil upon the shoulders, to signify the obligation which rests on all men of carrying the cross. The picture only teaches a great religious duty, which these men, notwithstanding all their reading of the Bible, have forgotten. This duty, in the book called Speculum Humanæ Salvationis, can be found inculcated in these words:—"A certain devout man besought God to reveal to him what service would be most acceptable to Him. In answer to his prayer he beheld a vision of our Lord bearing a great cross, and saying that the best service was to assist Him in carrying it." Hence, on the Ecce Homo ascribed to Correggio, which is at Munich, we read these lines—"Ego pro te hoc passus sum, tu vero quid fecisti pro me?" Zurbaran and Velasquez, by their prodigies of art, enable us to enter the monastery and live with the holy cœnobites. Before their pictures we feel the impressive influence of the cloister; there we behold, under the cord and cowl, the pale countenances of those devout contemplatists who, as Buffon says, "at their last moment do not end their lives, but cease to die." There, as in the visit of St. Anthony to St. Paul

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* Dom de Rancé de la Sainteté et des Devoirs de la Vie monastique, i. 368.

† Baruch ii. 18.

the hermit, by Velasquez, we indeed enter the desert, and visit the cell under the rock, and, in fine, assist at the colloquies between friends of God which yield the peace of heaven. In general, the great masters of Christian art proclaim the glory of the saints, and encourage men to pursue their steps. They seem to point at the glory of sanctity, like St. Ephrem, and to repeat his words, saying, "See—those are never objects of praise who indulge in delights, who are devoted to worldly dissipations, whose pleasure is in vanity after the manner of the Pagans. But our law is that of the beatitudes*."

There is, however, a distinct class of paintings exclusively Catholic, which point so clearly to the severest duties of the Christian law, that the moderns turn from them instinctively with shuddering, as if suddenly reminded by them that they have themselves adopted a different philosophy from that which actuated the Christians of old. To pictures of this kind St. Basil the Great alludes, exclaiming, "Rise up, O illustrious painters of worthy deeds! Make bright and splendid with the colours of your art the man more obscurely described by me, worthy of a crown. In displaying the glorious acts of the martyr, let the palm be given to the picture. I rejoice to be inferior to you in this kind of contest. Let the demons, astonished at the acts shown by you, mourn †." Mourn also do the moderns when they see them; they mourn, and they scorn. These disembowelments and decollations, say they, are too disagreeable for description. "I know not who," says the Père Cahier, "or rather I know not how many times, and by how many mouths, a certain philosophy of art has blamed very magisterially the representations of tortures in the churches. These tender complaints of philosophy remind one, that as there is sometimes laughter in tears, so there is a species of pathetic which moves laughter. But whatever the fashion of the day may dictate, we must not become sentimental to such a degree as to banish the thought, or even the sight, of heroism, through regard for nervous constitutions. Alluding to the tortures represented on the window, of St. Lawrence and St. Vincent, in the cathedral of Bourges, he cites these words of the monk Theophilus, "Si conspicatur fidelis anima quanta sancti pertulerint in suis corporibus cruciamina, quantaque vitæ æternæ perceperint præmia conspicit, vitæ melioris observantiam accipit;" conformable to the observation made by the historian of St. Vincent, who says, "ut cum omnibus erroribus, amoribus, et timoribus vincatur hic mundus, sanctorum martyria docent et docuerunt ‡."

These paintings, which shake the nerves of the Protestants,

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* S. Ephr. de Compunctione, Serm. i. † Hom. xviii.

‡ Monog. de Bourges, 265.

inspire men of the household of faith with the sentiments expressed in the old Spanish hymn for the festival of St. Vincent—

> "Id nostro maneat corde reconditum,
> Quod tormenta brevi prætereuntia
> Æternæ pariunt præmia gloriæ,
> Permansuraque gaudia *."

Besides, returning to considerations purely artistical, we may remark, that, if Ribera excelled in his representation of the physical suffering, Zurbaran has surpassed him in teaching the spirit of the true martyr, as in his vast picture, called the Martyrdom of St. Julien, which shows the holy resignation of the Catholic martyr, the pompous severity and constrained voluntary perversity and insensibility of his judges, and the sympathy which his courage awakens in other beholders, though as yet infidels. The picture of St. Agueda consoled by an angel after having her breasts cut off, painted by Paul Veronese, and placed in the Escurial, causes, even to a modern critic, not disgust at the horrible wound, but the tenderest pity; for he says, "The lovely face of the holy martyr, pale with pain, but full of resignation and hope, is one of the most pathetic objects which painting can offer to the eyes and to the soul." Bishop Challoner mentions a remarkable circumstance respecting the portrait of the English martyr John Duckett, which was made from the life after his condemnation. The martyr's natural complexion was pale; but immediately upon his arraignment, his countenance became in a manner angelical and his cheeks beautifully red, and continued so till his death; insomuch that those who had known him before, condemned the painter for not making his portrait like him; but all who had seen the man in the three last days of his life, confessed the picture exactly represented him as he then appeared. See, he adds, what a transformation grace can work in human creatures!

But whether fearful, or only pathetic and sublime, these artists all teach a lesson which, however disagreeable to some, is necessary in every age, and not perhaps less important even in our own; for, "it is well," as Cardinal Palæotus says, "to exhibit in painting the fortitude of holy martyrs. The Church wishes that the torments of the saints should be placed before the eyes of the faithful, in order that her children may be excited, by such trophies of patience, to cultivate a contempt of life whenever an occasion should require it †."

As of the martyrs, so the sufferings of the Head of martyrs

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* Arevalus, Hymnodia Hispanica, 251.

† Lib. ii. c. 35.

represented by the old painters, especially by the divine Morales, who no less studied and taught the sorrows of his blessed mother, excite the displeasure of the same class of critics, who only want courage to call for their suppression with the rest; but these pictures, besides their especial office, have an incidental mission to discharge, with regard to those thoughtful observers who can be led by them to reflect, not alone on the mystery they represent, but also on the profound ascetic contemplation which it produces in Catholic minds, and on the source from which such grace descends; for these pictures, which lead Protestants only to complain of "a too pathological exaggeration of the painful sentiment," verify, in the impressions which they produce on Catholics, the remark of Bede, who says, "Imaginum aspectus multum compunctionis solet præstare contuentibus, et eis qui literas ignorant, quasi vivam historiæ pandere lectionem *."

Again, the ancient mystic paintings, such as those Molanus speaks of, as having been in the old venerable halls of the monastery of Fulda †, where the vision of Ezechiel was represented in the church, formed another class of instruction imparted by religious art, which can lead to Catholicity.

Thus the doctrine of the two Adams, and the two Eves, is found repeatedly on stained windows. "It was too ancient in the church," says Father Cahier, "and too consoling to be neglected by the theologians of ecclesiastical art. She who was called the mother of all living, had deserved the name of the gate of death ‡, and the whole mystery is developed by the pencil. Again, by dragons put to flight by a Virgin martyr, or pierced by the cross, is expressed the penitence of converted souls who gain the mastery over the demon. The unicorn with its head in the lap of a Virgin, or with a Virgin on its back, signifies the triumph of the virginity of Mary in the mystery of the Incarnation: for the horn of the unicorn was supposed to be an universal antidote against all poisons; and hence the animal became a symbol of the cross. Another very affecting mystic symbol, already elsewhere noticed, is the Calandre, to represent Christ turning from the reprobate. Brunetto Latini speaks of this bird in his Trésor. Father Cahier, to explain the picture, describes the Calandre as a white and gentle bird, supposed to be found in the land of Jerusalem, which is usually brought to a man when he is dangerously sick and life despaired of. If he is to recover, the bird turns its face to him; but if he is to die, the bird turns to the other side, and refuses to look at him §." Again, the painting by Leonardo de Vinci, in which

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* De Templ. Sol. c. 19. i. c. 25.

† Hist. iv. 8.

‡ Mon. de Bourges, 200.

§ Id. 129.

St. Michael presents to our infant Lord, upon the lap of his blessed mother, a balance, who sinks with his hand one of the scales, as if foreshowing the object of his passion and death, unfolds the great Catholic doctrine of Christ's atonement, which is treated also by Guido, in his picture of our Lord in the Garden of Olives, with angels offering him the chalice and all the instruments of his passion.

But I should never finish were I to repeat all the lessons by which religious art points to the Catholic religion. Of the permanence of miraculous graces in the Church, we have not observed an instance; and yet with what impressive eloquence do innumerable paintings, against which Anglican critics barbarously inveigh, proclaim their certainty! The cure of the wounded youth by St. Dominick, as painted by Angelico de Fiesoli; the reception of the stigmas by St. Francis, by Porbus; the raising to life of the peasant's child, by St. Benedict; and countless other pictures of the same class, show with what mind the Catholic faith disposes men, not of the lowest only, but also of the highest order, to behold or to receive miraculous gifts. In general, and as a last remark, we may extend the observation already made respecting portraits to theological pictures, and call attention to the accessary details, and to that local colouring, however obnoxious to the charge of anachronism, with which paintings of this class convey secondary lessons, pointing impressively to the Catholic faith, or to Catholicity in manners. Thus, in the nativity, by Zurbaran, we see the sweet joyous simplicity and reverence of the Spanish Catholic peasants at the time when the painter lived; and in the adoration of the Magi, by the same artist, the type of venerable old men in the church adoring our infant Lord. I like this whole region, and willingly could spend my time in it. But having pursued the road of art so far, we meet at length the men themselves whose works alone have hitherto supplied direction; and now it will be found that we cannot inquire long respecting the history of artists, without being led to conclusions of no unambiguous tendency in regard to our determining the final end which all men should have in view while traversing the forest of the present life. The first artists whom we find upon this road, within the limits of Christianity, are martyrs, who shed their blood for adhering to the Catholic doctrine, which both ancient and modern heretics have condemned. Thus, St. Lazarus, born among the mountains of Caucasus, was a painter in a convent of Constantinople, who suffered tortures from the hands of the Iconoclasts. Zonaras relates that this monk and noble painter incurred the indignation of the Emperor Theophilus for painting holy subjects. Being cast into prison, and cruelly tortured, after recovering a little, he again began to draw sacred figures, when the tyrant ordered

that red-hot plates should be applied to his hands; yet even then, while the wounds were still fresh, he painted holy figures, and survived the tyrant. Amongst other subjects, we are told that he painted the Saviour on the Cross *. Following such men, the road becomes wild and desolate, leading through forests and hardly accessible solitudes; for, during the persecution by the Iconoclasts, the woods and caves of rocks were peopled with painters who fled from its violence †. On the other head, ecclesiastical history mentions five men, skilled in the art of sculpture, who preferred death under the Emperor Diocletian, and underwent a cruel martyrdom, rather than fabricate an idol. These were Claudius, Nicostratus, Symphorianus, Castorius, and Simplicius, who are commemorated on the 8th of November; yet they pursued their art under Christian inspiration, for we read "quod fuerunt artifices insignissimi, et marmorum cæsores probatissimi, et artem suam crucis signo munire consueverant ‡."

Descending to later times, the road of art leads us to the sweet retirement of holy monasteries, and to the tranquil scenes of a devout Catholic life. Sculpture, as well as painting, was cultivated in the cloister. St. Thiemus, abbot of the Benedictin monastery of St. Peter, at Saltzburg, in the eleventh century, was celebrated not alone for his learning, but also for his skill as a sculptor,—the monks still preserving an image in ivory carved by his hand §. Painting flourished in the cloister from the time of Cassiodorus, who cultivated the art himself. The monk Methodius; the monk Saturninus, of whom we read, in the life of Pope Gregory the Great, as having painted his portrait; the friar Bartolomeo; the friar John of Fiesoli; the Capuchin friar Bernardino Strozzi; the Camaldule monk Lorenzo; the Dominican friar Fray Juan Bantista Mayno, whose genius is praised by Lopez de Vega; the Jesuit Pozzo; the monk Fray Juan Sanchez-Cotan, whose talents are said to be calm and tranquil as the cloistral life; Jerome Benet, the Jesuit of Valladolid; Ramon Berenguer, the Carthusian; the blessed Pedro Nicholas Factor, Franciscan of Valencia, who illustrated the order not only by his talents in the art, but by his holy life, which has been written by Joachim Company, archbishop of Valencia; father Ferrado, Carthusian of St. Mary de las Cuevas, near Seville, where his holy life was a model of all observance; father Martin Galindez, Carthusian of Paular, whose death, at the age of eighty, was deplored as much by artists as by the religious whom he had edified by his sanctity; father Gaudin, of the same

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* Lib. v. Annal. † Const. Porph. Continuat.

‡ Ap. Palæot. de Imag. Sac. 1. c. 8.

§ De Ypes Chronic. Gen. Ord. S. Ben. ii. 21.

order, in the monastery of Scala Dei; brother Irala Yuso, the Franciscan of the convent of Madrid, in which he passed forty-eight years without leaving his cell, excepting for the choir and the refectory, cherished by his numerous pupils, who flocked to his cell, and revered by the friars for his strict observance of humble poverty and every grace; Juncosa, who died in a hermitage near Rome, in which he had permission to devote himself to painting and private devotion; brother Diego de Leyva, Carthusian of Miraflores; father Melgarejo, the Augustinian of Grenada; brother Molina, Franciscan of Jaën, where he took the habit in fulfilment of a vow made in a tempest on his return from Rome; Vera, the Hieronymite of Lussiana; Fra Sebastiano Luciano; Walter, the monk of St. Alban's *, and a crowd of others, who, under the monastic cowl, cultivated painting, point the way for all lovers of art who may be in danger of wandering from the faith which is the source, even in that domain which belongs to them, of the sublime and beautiful.

In Spain different religious orders claimed certain of the chief artists as being in peculiar affection their own. Thus the Franciscans had Murillo; the Carthusians, Zurbaran; and the Jesuits, Juan de Las Roelas,—the last being a cavalier by birth, a scholar by education, and a painter by choice, who painted only sacred subjects in a true celestial style.

Asterius, bishop of Amasia, contemplating an image of the passion of the martyr Euphemia, used these words, "The painter, also, who painted the whole history according to his ability by art, is pious †." Pictures are often made to attest formally the piety of the artist who painted them. Thus, Lucas of Leyden represents himself in prostrate adoration at the feet of the blessed Virgin in glory ‡. Gaspard de Cræyer, in his vast Ex-Voto in the gallery of Munich, represents himself, his wife, sister, brother, and nephew, in like manner worshipping. On the Presentation in the Temple, by Fra Bartolomeo, at Florence, we read these words,—Orate pro pictore olim sacelli hujus novitio. On the Marriage of St. Catherine, by Correggio, are these words,—Laus Deo! per Donna Matilda d'Este.—Antonio Lieto da Correggio fece il presente quadretto per sua divozione. On the Deposition of the Cross, at Venice, are these words,—Quod Titianus inchoatum reliquit, Palma reverenter absolvit, Deoque dicavit opus. Under a Lion, by Juan de Licalde, though ordered by the king, as an inscription states, are the words,—John de Licalde, for the love of God, 1628. Pedro Orrente signed his pictures with a cross and the initials of his

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* Mat. Paris. 1213.

† Molani Hist. ii. 16.

‡ At Munich.

name, as did also Zurbaran. The gratitude, too, of the artist to his teachers is sometimes manifested, as in the portrait by Albert Durer, on which we read,—This portrait, in 1516, was made by Albert Durer, of his master, Michel Wohlgemuth, in his eighty-second year, who died on St. Andrew's Day before sunrise. On the portrait of Martin Schoen, by his pupil Largkmaïr, the artist wrote,—May God be merciful to him! The humility of the artist is also often attested. On the Christ served by Martha and Mary, by Alessandro Allori Bronzeno, the artist wrote,—Dum pingebat melius lienare non potuit. In fact, the great artists of the middle ages were generally not alone Catholics but devoutly religious men, who, in a twofold and higher sense, observed the custom of Apelles, to leave no day without a line. Juan de Joanes, esteemed by many as equal to Raphael, though scarcely known out of Spain, and even in his own country without the celebrity he merits, is said to have escaped the general notice in consequence of the ascetic piety in the practice of which he spent his life; preparing himself to begin each picture, destined only for churches, by receiving the Eucharist, he lived nearly as a monk, far from the court, far from the crowd. The absence of Zurbaran's pictures from royal collections is explained by the similar habits of his life. After leaving his village of La Fuente de Cantos, in Estremadura, he remained at Seville for the rest of his days in the simple retirement of a devout life, the spirit of which is seen in all his pictures, which are, without an exception, grave, serious, holy, indicating a mind that forgets the earth and aspires after heaven. After the death of Luis de Vargas, at Seville, the instruments of maceration with which he used to chastise his body were found. This great artist, the excellence of whose Descent from the Cross may be thus explained by the secrets of his mystic life, used to sleep in the coffin which he had made for himself; and yet, notwithstanding all his penance and austerity, he never lost the amiable gaiety which characterized his manners. "What is your opinion," some one demanded, "of this Crucifixion?" pointing to a bad picture. "Methinks," he replied, "our Saviour is saying, Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do." Alphonso Cano was major-domo of the confraternity of our Lady of the Seven Dolours at Madrid, which circumstance, as Quilliet remarks, is sufficient to disprove the modern charge against him, as the confraternities were too scrupulous to admit a member who was accused. Sassoferratus used to go to communion before commencing a picture. The great Roman painter, Petrus Cavallinus, who made the crucifix in the church of St. Paul without the walls, which was miraculously employed in regard to St. Bridgid in the year 1370, was so eminent for his piety towards God, and his charity to the poor, and the innocence of his life,

that he was esteemed a saint *. John of Fiesoli, the venerable brother of the order of Preachers, was called angelic on account of his Christian simplicity and deep humility. He never worked at a painting without prayer. On his venerable tomb in the Dominican convent of the Minerva, at Rome, are these affecting lines—

"Non mihi sit laudi quod eram velut alter Apelles,
Sed quod lucra tuis omnia, Christe, dabam;
Altera nam terris opera exstant, altera cœlo;
Urbs me Johannem flos tulit Etruriæ."

In the chronicles of the order of Servites, we read of a certain painter, in the year 1252, who, being engaged in the net of sins, had often attempted to paint the countenance of the blessed Virgin, which is called of the Annunciata at Florence; and as he always failed, he suspected that the cause was to be sought in his own sinful life. Therefore he went to confession, and having received the sacraments, he was enabled afterwards to succeed in such a manner that it was thought he must have been assisted by angels. We read also, says the same ancient writer, of Fra Bartholomæo, of the order of Preachers, who was no less distinguished by sanctity of life than by his art, as indeed the countenances of his figures can proclaim †.

"In our times," says Cardinal Palæotus, "a pious painter of Bologna, when pressed to paint portraits of persons, for reasons which he deemed connected with what was unlawful, used to give the persons who asked for them a picture of the flagellation of Christ, or of our blessed Lady ‡." Frederic Borromæo, in his book De Pictura Sacra, says, "Our city of Milan possesses an artist of great piety and modesty, named Annibal Fontana, a silent man, and solitary and meek, devoted to art, not for the sake of princes and great men, as some others, but on account of God, offering to him what he gained from him; for when he had finished a statue and obtained the just remuneration, after a few days of honest rejoicing he would silently and secretly bring to the altar a good part of the price." St. Felix de Valois, when a youth, applied to the art of painting, and gladly followed his master who taught it, "Cum ea ars," says Baronius, "videretur ei futura subinde pietatis illecebra, et sanctæ cogitationis occasio." Nor did he fail in his object; since, while painting our Lord upon the cross, his eyes used to overflow with tears; for he used to think how different were the wounds he represented from those which Christ suffered; and when he painted saints or angels, he meditated on their virtues and their purity.

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* Palæot. de Im. Sac. lib. i. c. 8.

† lib. i. c. 8.

‡ lib. ii. c. 21.

Alfonso de Andrada says, that he has been caught sometimes holding the pencil in his right and the pallet in his left hand, so absorbed in himself that he seemed wholly wrapt and insensible to all around him *. Such was the spirit of many of the great sculptors, too, of the middle ages. Gregorio Hernandez, who is called the Murillo of Castilian sculpture, never proceeded to his work without purifying his soul by prayer. "He spoke to the people through the language of the eye, and made sculpture a means of religious education. Truly devout, his recreation was in charitable works, attending the sick, and burying the friendless dead."

The Catholic Church was so conscious of possessing many men of this type, that in her prayer at the consecration of a new crucifix she uses these words, which seem to imply her belief that all artists who work for her are so inspired, "Consecrate, O Lord, this sign of the cross—quod totâ mentis devotione famulorum tuorum religiosa fides construxit †." The religious love of Catholic painters bore its fruits in almsgiving and charity, and the neglect of their own fortune. Morales wanted means for his dinner, and for his supper too, as he told Philip II. Murillo died poor in worldly goods. True votary of the holy almoner, St. Thomas of Valencia, he practised, we read, "the charity which his pencil preached; and his funeral was hallowed by the prayers and tears of the poor who had partaken of his bounties." Alonzo Cano, with all his eccentricities, which exposed him to an unfounded accusation, whose gains were given away in charity, and, when moneyless, whose drawings were substituted, which the poor sold to amateurs, was so poor, though always richly paid, that his death-bed expenses were defrayed by the chapter of Granada. Diego Diaz spent the immense sums which he gained by his paintings in founding the hospital of Mercy, in which he is buried, at Valladolid. Pedro Micier, who acquired a great fortune in Arragon by his frescoes, towards the close of his life spent all in works of charity and in generosity to churches. Antonio Villamor, dying at Salamanca, left a memory in benediction with the poor. Serra, the Catalonian painter of history, employed the great fortune which he acquired, in assisting the poor of Marseilles during the pestilence in 1721, the horrors of which he afterwards represented when he had retained nothing but his genius. It need hardly be added, that a true nobleness of mind distinguished the artists of the Catholic schools. "Feeling and painting like a gentleman," says a recent critic, speaking of Zurbaran, "he combined the force of Caravaggio with the decorum of the stately Spaniard." But we should not overlook the condescending kindness of the

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* Baron. Annales Ord. SS. Trin. 36.

† Pont. Rom.

great Catholic masters to their pupils. How greatly Murillo was beloved by the young artists whom he taught! How deeply was Father Antonio Villanova regretted by all the youth whose master he was! When Gaspard Becerra was dying, he felt nothing more urgent, after the interests of his wife and children, than to solicit Philip II. in favour of all his pupils, nine of whom he named especially in a placet which he left for the king. Painters in their lives and in their death are associated with the love of the cloister and the love of Christ. Lucas Jordanus so loved the abbey of Mount Cassino, that he painted gratis the twenty virtues which correspond with the miracles of St. Benedict, and besides gave many other pictures to the monks *. The great Pablo de Cespedes painted nearly all his celebrated pictures for the Jesuits of Cordova, which on the banishment of the order by Charles III. were removed and lost. The most curious documents respecting the ancient Spanish painters were all to be sought in the archives of churches and monasteries for which they had devoted their labours, and which, instead of misdirecting their genius, as some now pretend, used, as in the instance of El Mudo, to send them on a journey to Italy, when the monk painter, as the good Hieronemite of Logroño, deemed himself incompetent. "The Spanish painter's first inspiration," says an English author, "was drawn from the pictured walls of the churches or cloisters of his native place, where he had knelt a wondering child beside his mother, where he had loitered or begged when a boy; to their embellishment his earliest efforts were dedicated, out of gratitude perhaps to the kindly Carmelite or Franciscan, who had taught him to read or fed him with bread and soup, or who had first noticed the impulse of his boyish fancy, and guided his desperate charcoal round the convent walls." Penez Sedano, canon of Toledo, found in that church notices of more than 200 artists who had contributed to its decoration. Nicolas Borras, after painting the high altar of the monastery of St. Jerome of Gaudia, asked for his remuneration that they would give him the habit of a Hieronemite, in which he closed his life amongst them at the age of eighty, a model of the cloistral perfection. Vincent Guirri, after being received into the Augustinian convent of Valencia, employed all his time, as Father Jordan relates, "in doing penance, praying, and painting." When Juan Rizi returned to the monastery of St. Martin in Madrid, he evinced his affection for that community, by representing in one picture all the individuals of every class that composed it. Eustache le Sueur, finding his end to be near, sought an asylum with the Carthusians, whom he edified by his death, expiring in his thirty-eighth year in the

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* Gattala, Hist. Cassinensis, xii. 713.

arms of the prior *. Lucas of Leyden, in his last sickness and to his last breath, exercised the art which he had cultivated with so devout a mind. He even drew a figure over his death-bed the day before he expired; he ordered himself to be carried into the open air, that he might behold once more the sky, the work of the Lord †. Mutianus, an Italian painter, in his last will founded a hospice in Rome for poor youths who should come there to learn the art of painting, and chose his burial in the church of St. Mary Major ‡. Murillo by his will directed his body to be buried before a particular altar, where he used to pray and contemplate the passion in the Church of the Holy Cross in Seville; and he chose the words Vive moriturus for his epitaph, which truly expressed the principles which had governed his life. This Church was pulled down by Soult, leaving in the street the ashes of the great painter who had conferred such glory upon Spain.

Methinks this road cannot lead us further without finding ourselves arrived at the supreme blessed end, where every desire finds its object. We may however follow it still a few paces, to remark how the interests of art itself, and the natural desire of encouragement which should animate those who cultivate it, supply a last signal to direct us to the Catholic Church.

"By liberal arts," says St. Anthony of Padua, "I understand not those which are commonly called liberal, but those which can liberate men from the slavery of sin, and deliver them up to their own liberty §." If painting and sculpture are to be classed in this category, we shall certainly be directed to desire those remedies and purifications which can alone be derived from the Catholic religion; and we shall be convinced of the importance of those ancient Catholic manuals of art which prescribe the practices of a devout life, and which suppose attention to its duties, as when Cardinal Palæotus proposes to treat the question, Whether it be lawful to paint a sacred picture for the use of the Church on a festival ||? and composes a chapter answering to these words, which he prefixes to signify its subject, "De modo sacræ confessionis à pictoribus faciendæ, cum quibusdam interrogationibus, unde melius agnoscere valeant errores suos, et purgare eorum conscientias ¶." "Sacred pictures," says the Cardinal, "should move the hearts of the beholders and elicit piety;" but painters who are not better informed than other men in regard to religion, cannot express the affection of piety in their

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* Vitet, Etudes sur les beaux Arts, i. 175.

† De Richebourcq, Ultima verba factaque, &c. ‡ Id.

§ S. Antonii de Padua, Dom. I. in Quad. Serm. ii.

|| De Im. Sac. lib. v. c. 22.

¶ Id. lib. v. c. 25.

works of which they have not the sense in their hearts. Therefore many pictures fail in accomplishing their object*." Not only to religious instruction, but to deep ascetic piety art is indebted for its perfection. If the passion of our Lord was the favourite subject of blessed Pedro Nicolas Factor, we read that this great painter modelled his own life on it; and that he used often to retire to solitary spots among the hills, to meditate on it with tears. "The absorbing end and scope of the Catholic artists," as a modern writer observes, "was the altar of the Eternal, not the annual exhibition; and their compositions told with concentrated intensity, from their very simplicity bearing the stamp of that grand singleness of purpose and faith which directed them." But this writer seems to suppose that their faith is to be counted among by-gone inspirations, and that painters can no longer possess the inward hold that doubts not. He writes under the impressions produced by what he observes around him. It would lead us too far aside to trace the influence of the modern opinions comprised under the general epithets of Protestantism and Philosophy upon art, which consideration alone has led so many great men in our age, like Overbeck, Cornelius Hess, and Hervey, to the happy opening where grace was waiting to conduct them to the centre, as if by the very hand of the angelic painter. Indeed, if no other obstacle existed to impede the progress of Protestants upon the road of art, the utter uncertainty, in point of fact, of their own ideas respecting the object to which it should be directed, and their want of any certain definite principles in philosophy, would account for their hindrance. After reading their most elaborate disquisitions upon painting, it is evident that they do not know themselves what they want; for they praise in one page what they condemn or ridicule in the next. As in studies, so in art, they are bewildered. Descending to the details of execution, and to the material development of their skill, we may observe that even those critics, who are the furthest removed from Catholic impressions, have been struck with the absence of grace and dignity in all the religious compositions of the artists who followed the banner of the false reform. Speaking of Rembrandt's Descent from the Cross, one author says, "It is only this subject in name; for without the cross marked in it, no one could recognize the man God, his mother, or his beloved disciple. The first emotion at seeing it would be that of irony and derision, if the effect of light did not constitute it a prodigy. The whole merit consists in the energetic opposition of light and shade; whereas with the Catholic Correggio, the employment of these contrasts, though indicating equal skill, is not

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* De Im. Sac. Proœm.

suffered to become more than an accessory to the far higher moral beauty of the scene represented. The Catholic artist moves not alone the eyes but the soul, making subordinate the effect to the ideal, and matter to spirit." In general, nothing can be less pious, less contemplative, less ideal, less deep in sentiment and thought, than the Scriptural pictures of the Protestant school. Their skill is wholly material, wholly manual. Nothing is said by the soul of the painter, and nothing speaks to the soul of the spectator. This observation applies to the most illustrious representative of the Protestant Dutch school, whether we consider his divine personages so painfully ignoble or his angels so surprisingly burlesque. We need not add, that it is just also in reference to his successors elsewhere—to Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose sacred compositions are absolutely ludicrous, and to Benjamin West, whose reputation has been properly qualified as inexplicable. Placed out of the pale of doctrine and sacred history, these artists fly for refuge to the simple and material imitation of common nature unsanctified; and, in fact, as if conscious of the unequal ground against which they would have to contend with Catholics on holy subjects, their skill is generally directed to a representation either of fantastic combinations, or to the scenes of vulgar familiar life—the interior of a drinking-house, a chemist in his laboratory, a weigher of gold amidst his bags, or a dance of boors, amidst the coarse revelries from which the religious sobriety and self-respect of Catholic artists revolted; while, even in their choice of sacred subjects, one can trace the secret association of ideas which determined men who might paint themselves, like Rembrandt, with glass in hand, and laughter on the lips. Experience, in fine, proves, that religious subjects cannot be represented worthily by painters who have no faith. Perturbations they can paint, as Pliny says of Aristides the Theban, anger, suspicion, scorn; dragons they can form to scare away birds, and procure sleep for some other Lepidus, who employed a painter to deliver his house in the grove by such a picture from their clamours; or they can paint grapes that will attract the birds; but the boy whose human face divine would have deterred them, as Zeuxis confessed,—but piety, charity, devotion, things not to be imitated, that Catholic painters possess the wondrous secret to represent—never.

The compositions of English artists, intended to inspire religious thoughts, can hardly be seen without astonishment; for the painful emotions would forbid a smile; so that on the whole we may affirm, that the influence of the Lutheran revolution upon art, in regard to subjects of this highest class, has been not injurious only, but absolutely destructive. As Pliny, though necessarily limited in all his views, says, alluding to the influence

on art of the Epicurean manners, "Ita est profecto; artes desidia perdidit; et quoniam animorum imagines non sunt, negliguntur etiam corporum *."

Again, the Catholic religion presents attraction on the road of art in consequence of the results which it produces, by dispelling from the mind of painters malice and pernicious error, which, in times subsequent to the false reform, have so invaded these domains that painting has become a school, not, as in Catholic times, of religion and honour, but of heresy, of licentiousness, of scandal, and of shame, in every form that a degraded and impoverished imagination can suggest or admire. In the fine arts, as a recent historian observes, Protestantism created, or at least revived, according to a forgotten Pagan practice, the caricature. Inspired by Luther and Ulrich of Hutten, its engravers represented the Church and the Pope so disguised as to excite the ridicule of those who revolted against God. The caricature succeeded to the facetious dialogue and to the Bacchic sermon; and every Protestant shop-window exhibited images disgusting and obscene, supplied by new pupils of Timanthus, who, as Pliny says, "pinxit libidines, eo genere petulantis joci se reficiens." So, while Catholicism was producing the Transfiguration, Lutheranism was giving birth to the Papst-Esel, and to a swarm of ignoble and detestable caricatures †—Mentiri astrologis, pictoribus, atque poetis. It is remarkable that, in regard to the representation of history by art, as peculiarly concerning the conduct of the reformers towards the Catholic clergy and the religious orders, the pallet has been wholly left to the opposition, to use a modern phrase. And rightly; for so far no one ought to wish that the lion should commence painting. It would be a wretched spectacle, for instance, however exact in point of historic truth, to see the English ministers and Anglican bishops represented at their work during the long period of the persecutions, seizing and arraigning priests, perhaps without any warrant, as in the case of Edward Barlow, heading the mob against them, instigating and threatening the jury, following the martyrs to the scaffold, to taunt and revile them, and showing more inhumanity, as Bishop Challoner calmly observes, than the very executioner himself. But through what wastes has the road of art been turned by the perverse in recent times! Cardinal Palæotus treats de picturis vanis et ociosis ‡. To what dimensions has the subject extended since the composition of his work? How faithfully has art become the echo of the modern literature—impious, full of turpitude, full of shame! The Cardinal treats also—de picturis imma-

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* N. H. lib. xxxv. 2.

† Audin. Hist. de Leo X.

‡ De Im. Sac. lib. ii. c. 30.

nibus, et horrendis *. If those poor cryptic paintings thus designated, which, he says, cannot instruct illiterate men, excited so greatly his displeasure, what would be his indignation if he could witness the new kind of monstrous imagery designed purposely to lead men aside from the pure simple ways of faith to the dark tortuous labyrinth of diabolical contagion? What caves and crypts could he find deep enough for such pictures? St. Thomas says, "that the sensitive cognition is vicious when it withdraws man from useful consideration †." Artists opposed to Catholicism seek to confirm it in this application: the whole third book of Palæotus was intended to show the dangerous and pernicious consequences of immoral painting, in which category the Catholic Church would place many works of art which pass with the moderns for philosophical and exemplary; for the morality of the two cities is in all respects opposed. When we survey the pictures with which revolted art makes war against all the principles of the ancient Catholic civilization, it is impossible not to perceive that this road has been purposely turned aside, to lead the deluded crowd that follows it into a dark and precipitous defile, ending in a gulf with slippery sides, where multitudes arrive infallibly to perish. "Some pictures," says Cardinal Palæotus, "have malice and cunning inscribed on their front, as those which represent monks or priests acting indecorously ‡." If history in later times has deserved the reproach of being a conspiracy against truth, modern art in fully equal measure participates in its guilt: and if the new morality in literature begins to startle senators, what shall we say of its satellite in the form of pictorial art? We read in the old books, that the demons in persons who were possessed dreaded the presence of a holy picture, the effect of which upon many is repeatedly attested §. One instance in particular is related of a perverse spirit ruling in a youth who, through fear of a picture of St. Jerome on the wall, did not dare to pass by the door of a certain cell ||. At present, art supplies but little protection of this kind to any door. No foul diabolic spirit would regard the productions of modern painters with consternation. Pictures, prints, statues, are now the chosen familiars of the dark angel—his most effective instruments—his sworn pioneers. Formerly it was thought that popular devotion sometimes ascribed undue importance to the mere beholding of a holy picture, as in the lines respecting the figure of St. Christopher, which Molanus, rather hastily perhaps, accuses of superstition—

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* lib. ii. c. 35.

† ii. 2. Φ. 167. art. 2.

‡ De Im. Sac. ii. 4.

§ Magnum Speculum, 358.

|| Id. 356.

"Christophore sancte, virtutes sunt tibi tantæ,
Qui te manè vident, nocturno tempore rident;"

and those—

"Christophori sancti speciem quicunque tuetur,
Istâ nempe die non morte malà morietur;"

and again—

"Christophorum videas: postea tutus eas*."

You ridicule these lines; but can you deny that many have seen the modern pictures early, to mourn late the consequences? Can you deny that many, by beholding the antagonist of the Catholic painting, have the same day died the evil death? No. Unquestionably there was wisdom in the ancient traditions of life connected with the road of art. Every day their truth becomes more visible, more palpable; and, if there were to be any regard for noble and elevated interests, governments themselves should take warning by the counsels of Palæotus, and exercise that care which he recommends to all superiors and magistrates —"ad evellendos abusus pravarum imaginum †." The Gentiles had notions respecting the dignity of art, which did not escape the attention of the ancient Catholic writers ‡. In Greece, they remark, it was not lawful for slaves to learn drawing or painting. Only noble youths could apply to the fine arts. If men of slavish and impure minds were now prohibited from handling the pencil, the number of pictures annually exhibited in Paris or London might not, indeed, be so considerable as it is at present; but the interests of art would not assuredly suffer in consequence; for, as a Spanish author remarks, the truth is, that to be a painter, as to be a poet, something more is necessary than even what most modern painters fail in—the knowledge of many things. The Catholic religion, by its holy teaching and its holy discipline, cleared for genius an elevated and glorious, as well as a safe and happy road, so that even that emulation which might defile the secret recesses of a heart that love should alone inspire, was felt as a stain, at least in another world to be purged away. Dante furnishes an instance where he represents the painter Oderigi alluding to Franco, his former rival in that art, and using these affecting words—

"In truth, I had not been thus courteous to him
The whilst I lived, through eagerness of zeal

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* Hist. ii. c. 35.

† De Im. Sac. lib. v. 26.

‡ Les Diverses Leçons de Pierre Messie, Gentilhomme de Seville, ii. 16.

For that pre-eminence my heart was bent on.
Here of such pride the forfeiture is paid *."

On the other hand, Catholicity protects the interests of art from the effects of every exaggerated sentiment or partial view. Christianity, no doubt, had effected a revolution in art by condemning the vices and refuting the falsehoods of the Pagan world, when passion was the furthest end of its cultivation, as poets themselves acknowledge, saying—

"In veneris tabulâ summam sibi ponit Apelles †;"

but it does not follow, as some would now pretend, that the Catholic influence would be opposed to the legitimate development of the beauties of form which the ancient art delighted to expose. Neither can we infer from that revolution that the defects of any particular epoch, however associated with admirable results in other respects, should be imposed as a perpetual thraldom upon genius in the fine arts. Whatever faith had sanctified was indeed venerable and precious, and Catholic art required its preservation. The Pagan scholars of the revival, actuated by a very different sentiment, disdained the beautiful mediæval works even of illumination, which is all that the Carlovingian epoch has left us of its power in the department of art, and would have destroyed our most precious monuments of Christian antiquity. Thus Leonardus Arretinus, writing to Nicolao, and asking that a book of Cicero should be written for Bartholomeo Capra, says, "Take care that there be no gold or colours on the page, but that the letters be in the ancient manner; for he might have them," he says, "in gold if he wished—verum hæc sprevit, et antiquitati deditus est ‡"—barbarous words, which indicated even an ignorance of the antiquity he so pedantically worshipped; for many authors, as Ovid § and Pliny ‖, clearly allude to the use of colours and of metals in manuscripts, which gave rise to the name of chrysographi for the imperial scribes; and doubtless the Natural History of Aristotle, which Alexander possessed, contained paintings with the text, according to the custom which required, under the Ptolomies at Alexandria, that a painter should be attached to the library. The Christian artists followed, therefore, the practice of the ancients in this respect, and their works were cherished with a parent's love. The old paintings, basso-relievos, and images, were under the safeguard of Catholic views subscribing to the rule expressed in the old line—

"Insanit veteres statuas Damasippus emendo ¶."

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* Purg. ii.
† Propertius.
‡ Leon. Arret. Epist. lib. ii. 10.
§ Trist. i. 1.
‖ lib. xxxiii. 7.
¶ Hor. Sat. ii. 3.

We find even that a painter named Andrew of Cervere, in Catalonia, for merely attempting to refresh the colours of the image of our Lady, which were become obscure, was thought to have been visited with a temporary blindness * ; and, in truth, as far as human judgment is concerned, in comparing the simple and profound pictures of the early Christian artists with the pretentious inanities of the successors of the great Catholic schools in the last century, we may admire the saying of Horace Walpole, that " the bad taste which precedes good taste is better than the bad taste which succeeds to it."

But while monuments in the style of the middle ages were cherished and transmitted unimpaired, the Catholic school of art allowed freedom, under proper limits, to artists in regard to the expression of all beauty, whether the Gentiles had cultivated it or not. A learned author says, that Charlemagne unintentionally attacked the interests of painting by the military system ; for, in multiplying the heavy cavalry, he required a new kind of dress for soldiers. " It was," he says, " in his reign, for the first time, that the whole body was covered with defensive armour of different kinds, coats of mail, and helmets and greaves and gauntlets. The Paladin was covered cap-à-pie, so that the whole beauty of the human body was concealed, and only force deemed estimable, all grace of movement being excluded †." No doubt the guides of Catholic art were never neglectful to point out, with Cardinal Palæotus, what cautions are necessary to Christian painters in the exercise of their profession ‡ ; but perhaps it is no less true, that they permitted, when necessary, a departure from that total envelopment of the human body which distinguishes the figures of a certain epoch. At all events, the early Christians seem to have had no such horror of uncovered limbs as some of the mediæval artists have expressed. Theodoret, in the fifth century, speaks of sailors navigating naked, and of bathers in naked groups retaining modesty §. In art, no freedom corresponding with simple manners, consistent with purity and the plain unsentimentality of common nature, was denied to those who pursued it with a right intention. It seems hardly fair to affect a greater austerity and reserve than the ecclesiastical legislators of art in Spain required ; and we see proof that they allowed a latitude in this respect quite sufficient to answer all the artistic purposes which the lovers of beauty in form could require. It only remains to observe, that a consideration even of the mere material interests of art yields an opening through which men

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* Dom Montegut, Hist. de N. D. du Mont-Serrat, 271.

† Emer. David, Hist. de la Peint. au Moyen Age, 74.

‡ De Im. Sac. v. c. 23.

§ Natalis Paquot, Notæ in Molan. de Hist. SS. Imag.

moved by it can be directed to Catholicity. Art, we know, was, with rare exceptions, but little encouraged in the ancient world. In Egypt artists, with the rest of the population devoted to manual labour, were supremely despised. Marcellus boasted that he first taught the Romans to esteem and admire the works of Grecian art; and, after all, nothing can be inferred from the solitary example of C. Fabius painting the walls of the Temple of Safety, and inscribing his name, as if that kind of distinction was wanting to the glory of his race *. King Attalus, indeed, paid 100 talents for one picture by Aristides the Theban. Candantes gave for a large painting by Bularchus as much gold as was required to cover it. Demetrius spared Rhodes through fear of destroying a picture by Protogenes, on a wall †; but the art itself was not in general honour. Seneca is not inclined to admit painting among liberal arts; and Valerius Maximus himself, who cites the example of Fabius, calls it not the less a sordid study; while Ulpian, the Jurisconsult, counts painters among common artizans, not intending to raise the latter, as we shall see on another road is the object of Catholicity. Aristotle, however, in his Politics, places painting among the arts in which youths, he says, are to be instructed, not only because it is useful, but "because it renders man a contemplator of that beauty which has relation to bodies; for," he adds, "it does not become ingenuous and magnanimous men to seek utility in all things." Accordingly, the emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, in their laws, reckon painters among those who exercise the liberal arts, and give them a privilege of not being compelled to lodge soldiers. To find effective and permanent encouragement for those who pursued the road of art, we must, however, refer to the influence of the Catholic religion, which ennobled its object, sanctified its exercise, and invested both the art and the artist with a character of such high honour, that kings themselves, like Philip II., Philip IV., René of Anjou, and Louis XIII., thought it no derogation to be esteemed as painters, the exercise of whose art had even supported the life of the emperor Constantine VIII., who practised it after he had been driven from the throne ‡. In Spain, the highest nobles used to cultivate painting. Hence, among artists are enumerated Hortes de Aguirre Marquis of Montehermoso, the Duke of Alcala, the Marquis of Aula, the Duchess of Aveiro, the brave warrior the Duke of Bejar, who was so distinguished at the siege of Buda, Don Philip Guevara, son of the great Don Diego of Guevara, embassador of Charles V. at the court of France, Jauregui d'Aguilar knight of Calatrava, Donna Sarmiento duchess of Bejar, who

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* Val. Max. viii.

† Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. vii. 39.

‡ Sigisbert in Chronic. ann. 918.

painted for so many churches, and the celebrated warrior Navarro, marquis of Victoria. But let us observe how the professed artist was honoured. When Guido was sent for to Rome, Pope Paul V. and the cardinals despatched their carriages to meet him at Ponte-Molle, according to the ceremonial for the reception of embassadors. The honours paid to Michael Angelo and to Raphael, by the sovereign pontiffs, are known to every one. Pope Urban VIII. conferred on Diego Romulo the order of Christ, and charged the Spanish cardinal, Trexo de Paniagua, to officiate at the ceremony of his knighthood, who gave him a chain of gold. Dying at Rome, he was interred in San Lorenzo, with all the pomp due to his order. The same pope lodged Velasquez in the Vatican, and gave him the keys of the apartments. The pontifical example, in this respect, was imitated by Catholic monarchs. Sanchez Coello, painter of Charles V. and of Philip II., was honoured with admission into the exalted class of the Privados del Rey, the king writing to him with his own hand, " al muy amado hijo,—to my dear son, Sanchez Coello." The same sovereign kept up a familiar correspondence with Titian till his death. Velasquez was appointed to the high dignity of aposentador mayor at the court of Philip IV., who admitted him as one of his familiar friends. On being shown one of his pictures, the king took the palate from the artist's hand, and painted on his breast the cross of the order of St. James. It was in the company of Velasquez and Calderon that this monarch loved best to pass his time, while he endured the loss of Roussillon, Flanders, Portugal, and Catalonia, with such resignation, that after receiving the surname of the Great on mounting the throne, he merited towards the close of his life to bear the emblem which was given to him, consisting of a ditch, with this motto—" The more we take from it, the greater it grows." At Venice, Velasquez was lodged in the palace of the king's ambassador, Philip IV. having given him 400 golden ducats for his journey, and his minister, the Count Olivarez, besides other sums, and a gold medal of the king, letters to all the ambassadors. On his return he was made first marshal of the palace, and at his funeral he was followed by all the grandees in Madrid, and by the knights of all the military orders, as also by the king's household. Alphonso Berruguete, painter of Philip II., had a funeral of equal magnificence in Alcala ; his father, who was painter to Philip I., in the style of Perugini, had been recompensed with hereditary nobility. Juan Carreño de Miranda was marshal of the palace under Charles II., who offered him the order of St. James, which he refused, saying, " Painting has no need of honours ; on the contrary, it can confer honours on all the world ;" but he accepted from the same king the privilege of wearing the dress which his majesty wore

on Maundy-Thursday, according to the custom instituted by Sanchez IV. of Castille, and followed by Charles V. The profession of artists, in Spain, was exempt from paying taxes and serving in the militia; for, in fact, from Juan II. down to Charles III., the fine arts were always held to be noble, and their professors admitted into the most cherished orders of a most punctilious chivalry.

"Poverty alone," says Theocritus, "excites men to labour in the arts"—

'Απενία,—μόνα τὰς τέχνας ἐγείρει·
῾Αὐτὰ τῶ μόχθοιο διδάσκαλος.

If this maxim continued to be true, it must be acknowledged that the Catholic religion supplied poverty with noble patrons. Not for the selfish rich man, insane, as the ancients said, by working for another, with projects corresponding to the engagement so condemned in the Gospel—destruam horrea mea, et majora faciam; and not less mad when reaping ill the fruits of another's insanity, did the artist of Catholic countries labour, but for churches or monasteries, for hospitals, or public edifices, for lay brotherhoods associated for some religious object, or for the common corporations of tradesmen, or for devout families of the highest and lowest rank; or, in fine, for the Christian poor, who are often the greatest lovers of painting, as was lately seen at Loeches, in Spain, where the country people rose in a body to prevent some paintings in the church of the convent there from being carried off by an English dealer. When certain pictures, sent lately by the stranger for a church in Normandy, arrived at the village, the peasants flocked to view them with an expression of respect and pleasure that constituted for the artist a vast remuneration. Such has always been the highest encouragement of painting. If we would ask who were their especial patrons, it was for the Hospital de las Bubas that Louis de Vargas painted his masterpiece; for the hostellery of Paular, and for the bridge of Segovia, that Manuel Santos Fernandez painted some of his finest pictures. Franquet worked for a hermitage, that of our Lady of Mercy, near Reus; Antonio de Horfelin, for the confraternity of carpenters in Saragossa; Ingles, for the hospital of Buitrago, where he represented the founder, the celebrated Marquis of Santillana, at prayer, with a page praying behind him; Don Manuel Tramulles, for the ceremonies of Holy Week at Barcelona; Luiz de Vargas, for a road with stations of the cross at Seville; Pedro Villafranca Malagon, for the festival of the Canonisation of St. Thomas of Villanova; Juan Estrada, for the diocese of Badajos, of which he was named painter by the bishop, Don Perez Minaya. Such were in all countries the encouragements of artists.

It was the custom in France every year, on the first of May, for the company of silversmiths, in memory of an ancient devotion, to make an offering to the Church of our Lady of a great religious picture, the most celebrated artists, as Lebrun and Le Sueur, contending for the honour of being chosen to execute it *. We should remark, too, that Catholicity provides for artists patrons who are themselves under the influence of religion. Those who ordered sacred pictures formerly could in general, without exciting any sense of incongruity, be represented in the act of devout prayer. Thus at each side of the Nativity, by Albert Durer, the knightly brothers, Baumgartner, who left the picture to the church of St. Catherine at Nuremberg, are seen in complete armour adoring our Lord. In the Descent from the Cross, by John Van-Eyck, at Madrid, the commanders of the picture are at prayer; as are also those in the Baptism of Christ, by Hemling, at Bruges, where are painted the husband with his patron saint and a son on one side, and his wife with her patron saint and four daughters on the other, all adoring. Similarly, on each side of the St. Christopher by Hemling, are represented those who ordered the picture—the husband and five boys, the wife and twelve girls. In the Ex-Voto, by Craeyer, the knight Donglebert and his wife are represented at prayer before the dead Christ. In the picture of the Blessed Virgin, by Alessio Baldovinotti, at Munich, the person who ordered the picture is represented adoring. In the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin to St. Ildephonso, Rubens represents kneeling, and attended by their respective patron saints, Albert of Austria and the Infanta Clara-Isabella-Eugenia, daughter of Philip II., who had ordered the picture. Titian similarly represents Alphonso I., first duke of Ferrara, between his wife and his son, kneeling before the Blessed Virgin, whose picture they had commanded. Pictures often point to Catholics eminently devout, as to the patrons to which they owe their production. The San Girolamo of Correggio at Parma, representing the Blessed Virgin, our Lord, and St. Mary Magdalen, was painted for Briseida Cossa, the widow of Bergonzi, who gave him for it forty-seven sequins, his nourishment for six months while he painted it, and, over and above the terms agreed upon, two cart-loads of wood, some corn, and a fat pig. The St. Cecilia of Raphael was painted for Helena dall' Olio Duglioli, of the family Bentivoglio, who was canonized. The Our Lady of the Rosary, by Dominiquino, was commanded by the holy mystic Cardinal Agucchi. The Our Lady of Pity, by Guido, was commanded as an Ex-Voto by the senate of his native city. The Virgin of Foligno, by Raphael, was commanded by Sigismondo Conti, chamberlain of Pope Julius II.; and the

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* Vitet, Etudes sur les beaux arts, i. 169.

artist represents him as a holy aged man, kneeling opposite to St. John the Baptist. On a triptych at Bruges we read these words, "This work was made for brother Jan Floreins, professed brother of the hospital of St. John,—opus Johannis Hemling." Saints were not alone the patrons of art in the ordinary sense. but the dispensers occasionally of a truly celestial reward to artists, who received miraculous graces resulting from their prayers. The artist who painted for Suso the Fathers of the Desert, having only made the outlines, was seized with an inflammation of the eyes, which required, as his physician said, an absolute repose for three months. Suso desired him to return the next day to resume the task. The painter had faith in the sanctity of his patron; he obeyed, and with perfect vision was enabled to complete the work. Cardinal Gabriel Palæotus, bishop of Bologna, in which city he was born in 1524, wrote his work on art, as he expressly says, for the use of his Church of Bologna; and that the passion for art in such men did not mislead them from their special path, may be witnessed in that noble Sadolet, who, after singing with laurel crown upon his head the discovery of the Laocoon, was not the less ready to turn from that road of art, in order to live among the poor wild mountaineers who had become his spiritual children*. We may judge with what kind of persons and places artists in search of patronage were conversant in Catholic times, from surveying the titles of the chapters of the fifth book of Palæotus, where he treats on the proper subjects to be chosen for painting, connected with the sepulchres of the dead †;—for the pictures to be placed in monasteries, cloisters, refectories, chapter-rooms, and the cells of monks ‡; for those to be placed in hospitals and houses of confraternities §; for those suitable to the palaces of magistrates, public halls, and senatorial chambers ‖; and for those which should adorn academies and libraries, both public and private ¶. Catholicism requires that pictures should be not alone paid for with generosity, but even regarded with respect as faithful monuments: "Dicendum est," to use the words of Molanus, "eas quoque picturas et imagines quæ solidis historiis innituntur, reverenter ab omnibus agnoscendas esse **." When the elements themselves seemed to respect the sacred pictures of Christians, as when the sea gave up the Santa Maria Dello Spasimo of Raphael, and the Archangel weighing the Souls, which is preserved, at Dantzig, it is not strange that men impressed with a sense of the mystery they represented, should regard their destruction as a sacrilegious as well as a barbarous act.

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* Chavin de Malan, Hist. de Mab. † lib. v. c. 7.
‡ v. 10. § v. 11. ‖ v. 12. ¶ v. 13.
** Hist. ii. 18.

The religious system opposed to faith, after undermining the ground of this respect, by its false and absurd interpretations, prompted men, through fanaticism springing immediately from them, and through avarice, which was the natural consequence of its having removed all the ancient sources of sanctification, to destroy with relentless ferocity the noblest works of art which could not be brought to fall in with the project of a mere ambitious egotism. It would be a dismal contrast to turn from this sublime and beautiful road of art to explore the destructive work of Protestants at their first onslaught, when they raged against holy pictures. Speaking of their visit to Cluny, an eye-witness says, that the horrors, which they committed in the sanctuary of God, were of such a character, that the demons themselves would have trembled and not dared to accomplish them. They fired at the picture of the blessed Virgin, and pierced the cheek; they thrust their sticks through the figure of Christ, in the painting of the Crucifixion, and spared the figures of the thieves *, probably from not being able to distinguish Dismas from Gistas; for had they known the line—

> " Gistas damnatur, Dismas ad astra levatur,"

no doubt the patron of the highest of the thirteen hermitages of Mount Serrat, in Catalonia, would alone have merited from them the destruction of his image; since, for reprobate thieves, their painters, like their novelists, seem to have a secret sympathy. A Mahometan direction of art, producing decorations like Turkey carpets, exclusive of the likeness of any living thing in heaven or earth, characterized for a long period the countries which embraced the reform, which indeed still seem to have a predilection for that very manufacture of the Turkish loom, though it proclaims a consistency in error that ought to shame those who adopt the Mussulman's interpretation to abuse the Catholics, while they practically defy it to please themselves. Down to the present day, Protestantism, in England, cannot treat upon art without stating its conviction, that " image worship is now practically positive; that too fine for the multitude are the distinctions between adoration direct and relative;" and evincing its erudition by delivering the matter so that we find the ASS in compound with the major part of its syllables, lamenting the sophistries of the Bellarmins of Rome, whom it compares to " the double-dealing hierophants of Egypt, trimming between the scepticism of the esoteric and the credulity of the outer court." The destruction of works of art indeed is stayed as far as the direct influence of Protestantism extends; but the

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* Lorrain, Hist. de Cluny, 228.

progeny of that error proceeds in another way, nearly as fatal as the former. The liberals, as they are called, have been content with plundering the monks in Spain and Portugal, boasting that they have discovered precious pictures in the catacombs of the Escurial and of other abbeys, as their brother of Paris vaunts his having first discovered the gothic cathedral of Notre-Dame, restoring them as they say to light, which means that they barbarously repaint, and then transfer their old masterpieces either to private cabinets or to national museums, where they accumulate them, often disjointed where they had been in compartments, without taking the trouble to bring together the once connected parts, maintaining the expediency of such measures by reasoning that cannot be better refuted than in the words of the Roman orator, who stigmatized the Sicilian prefect for conduct that bears a strong resemblance to their own. "You say," he indignantly asks, "that the noble object of the highest art was not understood by the ancient possessors—men most learned and humane?—Tu sine ulla bona arte, sine humanitate, sine ingenio, sine litteris,—for the personification of their system may most justly be so qualified,—intelligis et judicas? Vide ne ille, non solum temperantia, sed etiam intelligentia te atque istos, qui se elegantes dici volunt, vicerit. Nam quia, quam pulchra essent, intelligebat, idcirco existimabat, ea non ad hominum luxuriem, sed ad ornatum fanorum atque oppidorum esse facta, ut posteris nostris monumenta religiosa esse videantur *." Truly the galleries of the great, even in England, as well as the museums of Madrid, furnish a commentary on these words, which may direct the true lovers of art to wish for another kind of patronage, besides that which the ardour of possession or the power of rank and riches can supply; for of what avail can be the ancient religious paintings to the man who now possesses, to look on them with lack-lustre eye, like Mummius, suspecting, because so much money has been offered for them, that there is something in them of virtue which he knows not of †, and for that reason only keeping them, who, if gifted with more sincerity, might say, in the complaining words of the poet, though in another sense—

"Nec prosunt Domino, quæ prosunt omnibus artes ‡."

Such proprietors have no ideas in common, either with the subject or the author of the painting; the taste is therefore, after all, but a fortuitous excitement; for so far is it from being a durable appreciation of excellence, that, in point of fact, as all

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* Cicero II. lib. iv. in Verr.

† Plin. xxxv.

‡ Ovid. Met. i. 14.

worthy artists sorrowfully acknowledge, the only branch of painting which can hope to be permanently encouraged, where the modern views predominate, is that which ministers either to personal vanity or to the pride of birth; objects for which no corresponding talent would ever now justify the man who should withdraw the youth possessing it from the nobler task of tending his father's sheep; though Cimabue, for finding Giot to in the neighbourhood of Florence so employed, and directing him to cultivate art in the spirit of Catholicism, and to portray mind formed by Catholicism, has had all ages subsequent to bless his memory. Such patrons of art now, if viewed in connexion with their progenitors, resemble the Iconoclast emperors, who, after raging against every picture associated with a religious or lofty idea, ceased not to offer statues and portraits of themselves, their wives, and children, in all the cities of the empire, to the homage of their subjects. Men are even found to compose books, in which the triumphs of faith are styled worse than despicable subjects, upon which few dealers, they inform us, dare venture to risk the smallest amount of capital; and to affirm, that "painting has, since the Reformation, received a healthier tone and purpose, and that it must be the natural wish of every friend to the art, that this should long continue." How cheerfully on the false trail they cry,

> ——— "There's some ill planet reigns,
> We must be patient, till the heavens look
> With an aspect more favourable."

Meanwhile these calls, so counter, furnish the best conclusion to the proofs we have been witnessing, that the road of art can conduct man, through the love of truth in connexion with it, to the nurse and mistress of all that is great and beautiful in works of human genius,—the Catholic Church, which cherishes every germ of immortal desires, and brings to perfection every fruit of human ingenuity, to the glory of God, and to the consolation and advantage of the life of man.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ROAD OF LOVERS.

AND now a sweet foot-path branching off from the last road, through myrtle shades and jasmines, sparkling with their starry blossoms, leading over soft moss and ground enamelled with forget-me-nots, is presented at this point of the forest; and there is a pause as when beauty awes men at its approach. The turn, which we behold before us, leads to the centre, like the rest; but, though inviting, we must not long follow it, lest we should be conducted over ground that we have already partly traversed when pursuing the roads of art, of popular devotion, and of home; along all of which we beheld images that indirectly proclaimed the excellent results of love.

Ere we proceed far upon this path, sweet with the odour of the pine, and seeming only at first to conduct still deeper into the ancient forest, groups are seen through the trees, whose baskets of flowers laid upon the grass, blending their perfume with the embalmed zephyrs, mark the gap through eglantine to the pleached bower, where honeysuckles forbid the sun to enter,—

> " Dulcis enim quum jam primos Hymenæus amores
> Sollicitat, vincloque parat sociare jugali;
> Quum procus innuptæ, pueroque puella vicissim,
> Par ætate placet; captent ut tempora fandi
> Opportuna, legunt in eadem vite racemos *."

" Love, not the lowest end of human life," has given its name to this mysterious avenue, which only later ages have disdained. O first walk, cries Chactas, speaking of it, thy remembrance must be very puissant, since, after years of calamity and sorrow, thou canst so deeply move the heart of the old. Of love, as Dante saith, " the natural still is without error †." Here are no inhuman or selfish gallants, whose spirits toil in frame of villanies, with imaginations full of one object, and ready to sacrifice the universe for the least pleasure. Here we find silent wanderers, a tear and then a smile, a look towards heaven, an ear attentive to the song of the bird, a hand pointing to the setting sun; happy simplicity, an " unquestionable spirit," tender

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* Præd. Rust. ii. † Purg. 17.

but also affectionate and hallowed thoughts embracing the whole creation, compassion too for every sorrow. Here is youth as God, not as a false world, breathing poison from its pestilential literature, made it; for religion has protected and sanctified its innocence. This is the road, therefore, neither of cunning nor of falsehood, neither of vengeance nor of hatred, but that of respect for all, forgiveness for all, generosity for all. Yes, without using the words of a celebrated author, we may assent to his suggestion, that the young persons who are met here, having preserved the simple intention of their childhood, are among the last perhaps of the human race who would suffer themselves to be stopped or delayed by circumstance in following what they believe to be right, according to the bent of a generous nature; they are those, after all, who have least been influenced by its common enemy; for his darts most fatal when most directed to the spiritual part, inflaming it with social and political ambition, fly over their heads and leave them sound. Youth placed between two homes, that of its first, which it leaves weeping for the wide scene of life in the world, and that of its latter years, to which it finds its way by love, has the same gentle guides in both to point out the right direction; for the true road of love is devotion; and, as a Catholic author says, "No man or woman has ever felt true love without feeling a desire to become better, and to thank God for having given, by anticipation, a taste of celestial joys. Hence God calls to himself the hearts which are the most richly endowed with love; and hence the love of the creatures, though dangerous, may become one of the roads which lead to the divine centre of all human desires, when the soul discovers that its object should be the divine eternal beauty *."

This road indeed has soon two branches, one of which following good, as Dante says, but with disordered and irregular course † ends in an abyss; "for it was accompanied by that false love, whose violent property foredoes itself, which leads the will to desperate undertakings as oft as any passion under heaven that does afflict our nature." The true fountain is not discovered by all, as Maria del Occidente sings—

"But many a soul o'er life's drear desert faring,
    Love's pure congenial spring, unfound, unquaff'd,
Suffers, recoils, then thirsty and despairing,
    Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught."

But yet the fault is not in the road itself, or in those whom

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* Etudes sur les idées et sur leur union au sein du Cath. i.

† Purg. 17.

sweet religion sent as guides upon it to youth ; for still Beatrice has many companions in that ministry which she describes when saying,—

> "These looks sometime upheld him ; for I show'd
> My youthful eyes, and led him by their light
> In upright walking *."

Though many, who have been so led for a season, can lament its loss in Dante's very words, and say,

> ——— "Thy fair looks withdrawn,
> Things present, with deceitful pleasures, turn'd
> My steps aside †."

Why should any wonder that woman's love can sustain the steps of those who might without it falter? Even the tendril of some bright flower may sometimes save from a fearful fall one who climbs the giddy Alps. Therefore Plato calls love a ministry of the gods for the safety and preservation of young men.

The road itself, traced out by nature's own wise and loving hand, can lead to the true centre by the moral results of the attraction which moves those who enter upon it ; for love, that love which virtue begs and virtue grants, requires that all the obstructions of egotism should be pulled up by the roots ; it removes ambition, clears away base avaricious schemes, and tramples down all the briars of the odious jungle which intercepts the view of the lovely face of truth to the human soul. The ambition here is that not of self-advancement, but of self-devòtion. The contest is the natural emulation of the brave, the swift, of the skilful, and the strong. Manhood, yoked with gentleness and every noble grace, is found here, under all varieties of condition. Here are no sly inquirers after the contents of coffers, and the prescriptions of false pride, whose very dress and gait were we to describe, all would exclaim that love ought never to be named in connexion with such figures ; and that, if met upon this path, they should be thwacked hence with distaffs ; but young men, careless of gold and of what the world often deems important while seeking the hand of an Atalanta, by some means as little harmful, and as little in accordance with it, as contending in a foot-race—Aridus a lasso veniebat anhelitus ore. The history of the Order of Mercy contains a remarkable instance of the manner in which love was understood under the influence of the Catholic civilization, and of the horror inspired by a contravention of its purity. The blessed sister Isabella Guillen, of Valencia, born in 1268, a maiden for earth too dear,

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* Purg. 30. † Purg. 31.

so beautiful that she had been the theme of all tongues as far as Saragossa, Barcelona, and Madrid, was about to be married to Don Artal, a young Catalonian noble, who was nearly related to the king of Arragon, when hearing that her future spouse seemed to take an interest, along with his parents, in some of the marriage articles respecting her dowry, she thought within herself that he must, after all his show of love, which had even reduced him to sickness before consent had been obtained, esteem her fortune more than herself. The next day, early in the morning, she went to the church of the Order of Mercy, disclosed her chagrin to a father, and instead of returning to Don Artal, retired to the sisters of the third order, and took a vow to be a nun along with them *. Thus, even the old natural track of love, not inconsistent with the influence of a renovated state, leads on to virtue and simplicity, far from all the dark intricacies of the cursed labyrinth in which the selfish are engaged and lost. Tortuous and broken and dangerous without doubt it was; but religion has passed this way; and now the obstructions of the ancient evil, that before were incidental to it, have been in general removed, so that to the central fire the way is straight and plain. The guides were once unskilled and treacherous, mistrusted and degraded. The Peripatetics called woman, animal occasionatum, as if a monster and accidental production. Aristotle was of this opinion; and the language of the ancients generally, in regard to those who are to guide wanderers upon this road, however classical, is, in fact, full of barbarisms, corresponding with such base suspicion. Even the moderns, who have lost by choice, or the involuntary influence of birth, the impressions of the Catholic religion, are full of mistrust, and scorn ill-disguised. Milton appears to cling to the old error, making Adam, while in a state of false enchantment, say that woman seems

> "As one intended first, not after made
> Occasionally †,"

and expressing, moreover, a deliberate opinion of his own, when he complains that woman is interiorly of far inferior value—

> "Too much of ornament in outward show
> Elaborate, of inward less exact ‡."

The sun of the Church dispels such clouds, and sheds upon this path the joyful splendours of a glorious day. Under its genial beams the poet and the sage combine to inspire youth with confidence in the guidance which is furnished here. "Man," says

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* Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 177. † viii. ‡ viii.

Calderon, "has been called a little world—but woman is an epitome of heaven; and man is as far from her in virtue as earth is from the skies *." Religion confirms the testimony. Within the Catholic Church the woman's mind, untainted by the pestilence-bearing vapours which rest on the revolted world, a sweet and sacred home has found. To that home she leads those who trust her; for, as we before heard, what she loves, God loves. The road of her love leads, therefore, to the love of love, and by directions plain and unambiguous directing those who follow it to God, brings them, in consequence, to that Church in which He collects on earth those who are to love everlastingly with Him in heaven. Man can now use Adam's words in Paradise, and say to her he loves—

> "I, from the influence of thy looks, receive
> Access in every virtue; in thy sight
> More wise, more watchful;"———

for Love can use the words of an Italian poet, and affirm that she has saved him who followed it aright from a thousand dishonourable actions; since a vile act could never in any manner please a youth so influenced. "While young," she says in that sonnet, "he was always reserved and modest in his acts and in his thoughts, since he became the liege man of her who impressed upon his heart her sublime mark, which has caused him to be the favourite of God and men. Moreover, I gave him, what surpasses all, wings, to fly to heaven through mortal creatures, which are a ladder to the Creator for whoever knows how to estimate them."

Where faith has stamped its character on the maiden's heart, where, as Dante says, "at the name of that fair flower whom duly she invokes both morn, noon, and eve," man is reminded of the graces of her whom he delights to serve, woman's divine air and her countenance, her words and her sweet smile, can so separate him from all evil influences, that no obstacles upon the road to truth will be able to detain his feet from pressing forwards to embrace it, and then hand in hand he is led to his second home, where love and truth made one, with it will remain with him thenceforth for ever; for oh, they who have a heart of that fine frame to pay this debt of love but to a creature, how will they love when the rich golden shaft hath killed the flock of all affections else that live in them? Therefore St. Thomas of Villanova says, "God is a certain centre of love, towards which the weight of love directs every creature,—Est enim centrum quoddam amoris Deus, in quo dirigit omnem creaturam pondus amoris †." Let us hear the remarkable testimony

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* Life is a Dream.

† Dom. xvii. post Pent. ii.

of a living witness, whose conversion is nevertheless of the domain of history. "I ought to mention here," he says, "a certain revolution which took place in my religious ideas at the epoch of my betrothal. I repeat it; I had belief in nothing; and in this entire nullity, in this negation of all faith, I had found myself perfectly in harmony with my friends; but the sight of my betrothed awakened in me I know not what sentiment of the human dignity. I began to believe in the immortality of the soul; even what is far more, I set myself instinctively to pray to God. The thought of my betrothed elevated my heart towards a God whom I had not before known, whom I had never invoked, to whom no prayer had ever escaped my lips *." Let no stern critic, therefore, or profane scorner, thinking evil, or unable to comprehend the immense variety of ways that radiate from the divine centre, denounce as denied to all but the reprobate a path that has been trod by such men, and by martyrs too, and which the austere holy saints who chronicle their triumphs have commemorated as leading in many instances to the glorious crown; for, take one example from the annals of English persecution,—"Francis Page, a priest and martyr, was brought up," says Challoner, "in the Protestant opinions and to the study of the law. While clerk to a noble lawyer in London, he fell in love with a young gentlewoman, a Catholic, who induced him to make a serious inquiry into matters of religion. Father Gerard Thompson satisfied his doubts, and reconciled him to the Church. But this was not all. Page not only arrived by this path of love at the fountain, but feeling himself quite weaned, by the discovery of truth, from earthly thoughts, his confessor being committed prisoner to the Tower, he renounced the advantageous match of which he had so near a prospect, passed to the seminary of martyrs in Douay, and thence being sent upon the English mission, won his crown at Tyburn, uttering the name of Jesus as he expired."

But we must not linger here amidst these flowers; for the path at every step is intersected by roads which have been already followed. Affecting in its incidents, rich and charming in its fruits, celestial in its termination, the path of love would exhibit views of infinite variety; but our time requires thriftier using. Through childhood and youth, through the sweet influences of family and home, through the elementary training of the schools, through travel and many curious observations of nature and of man obtained by it—in fine, by the roads of art and love, we have come to that point where, as the poet says, "a change comes over the spirit of my dream." The wanderer

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* Conversion de Marie-Alphonse Ratisbonne, écrite par lui-même, 1842.

is returned, and "journeys end in lovers meeting." I see him stand before an altar with a gentle bride. After a short delay, the roads will lead through graver regions of more severe beauty, as we follow him, now confronted with the mazes of maturer life, restless and impatient, still passing from one avenue to another, under the action of unknown and incomprehensible laws, free to recede from truth, and find sorrow with wider and wider desolation, or to advance to it, crowned with wreaths of sweetness, each day more assured, more noble, more Godlike, and inebriated with a foretaste of heaven.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

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Gilbert & Rivington, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

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S0-BQE-688